PEOPLES WITHOUT SPACE?

CHRISTOPHER C. ROBINSON

Nothing, we believe, presents so fair a field for economical analysis, even in this age of new lights, as the subject of colonization. . . . So grateful to our national pride has been the spectacle, that we have never paused to inquire if our interests were advanced by so much nominal greatness.

[Richard Cobden, *England, Ireland and America*, 1835.]

All the advantages claimed for the mother country are for the most part illusions. . . . A colonial policy for us would be just like the silken sables of Polish noble families who have no shirts.

[Bismarck, 1868 and 1871.]

Relations between Italy and Abyssinia have for many years been on a satisfactory footing, and it is Italy's interest that Abyssinia should remain an independent state and increase in prosperity and civilization.

[Luigi Villari, *The Expansion of Italy*, 1930, p. 51.]

We are faced to-day with the necessity of creating an Empire.

[*Lavoro Fascista*, June 20, 1935.]

I

THE Have-nots are clamouring that they are "peoples without space," and are disturbing the world with their claims for expansion. Germany is arming; Italy is fighting; Japan, having done the immediately necessary fighting, is digesting her gains, and steadily, though less spectacularly, absorbing more. The Haves are counter-arming, with growing anxiety.

The Haves are disturbed in more than their peace and comfort; they are disturbed in their consciences too. They ask themselves whether it is possible or sensible to

sit on the safety-valve; but they also ask themselves whether it is fair for them, with their great colonial possessions, to ignore these claims of the Have-nots, and to apply sanctions to Italy when she seeks "a little corner in the sun." Surely it is as natural that the Have-nots should be "dynamic" as that the Haves should be "static." The rich, in every national society, have had to make enormous concessions. Must not the rich in the international society do the same? Is it not clear, on every consideration of conscience as well as of common sense, that the Haves must pay the price of peace?[1]

England, the most conspicuously endowed and most envied of the Haves, has agreed that the question should be considered, and has said that she is ready to consider it. It becomes, therefore, a practical question. It may closely affect Canada. Her immense territory, rich in natural resources and inhabited by only eleven millions, makes her prominent among the Haves. Undoubtedly, if the Haves are to pay a price for peace, Canada will be expected to contribute.

The Have-nots make it plain that they feel a grievance, and equally plain that their grievance endangers peace. But it is not so plain that the Haves can remedy this grievance, or even that they ought to try; nor is it at all plain what kind of remedy would be effective. Least of all is it plain that the remedy lies in some sort of colonial concessions. All these questions depend on the nature of the grievance—whether it is material, political, or psychological. What, really, do the Have-nots want, and why do they want it?

It is extremely difficult to answer this question, and

[1]For a recent, forcible, and widely accepted statement of this view, see F. H. Simonds and Brooks Emeny, *The Price of Peace*, London, 1935, and *The Great Powers in World Politics*, New York, 1935.

impossible to answer it with certainty. Yet in all ordinary business-dealings the first obligation of anyone asserting claims against another is to state his claims definitely. What is equally important, if he wants his claims considered, is that he must state them exhaustively, since claims in themselves reasonable may fairly be thought unreasonable if their satisfaction is to be made a stepping-stone to further claims.

So far, the Have-nots have not thus stated their claims, still less indicated what assurances they are willing to give that if these claims are settled they will not claim more. No one knows what Germany wants, or what Italy wants, or what Japan wants. Months of laborious and sympathetic inquiry have failed to elicit from Signor Mussolini any clear statement even of what he wants in Ethiopia. The moment a way of satisfying one of his claims is suggested, another claim is put forward. This failure of the Have-nots to define their claims seems to be of controlling importance in the whole discussion, to constitute a strong objection to the claims themselves, and to go far to justify the Haves in maintaining a negative and defensive attitude towards them.

The difficulty of determining what the Have-nots want, and why they want it, is not least acute in the case of their colonial claims. According to Mussolini's various declarations, Italy is attacking Ethiopia because she wants (1) revenge and/or punishment—to "settle accounts," (2) defence and security, (3) to spread civilization, (4) room for her surplus population, (5) wealth, (6) power, (7) prestige, and (8) to "fulfil her historic mission." As no addition has been made to this list for some time, we may treat it, provisionally, as exhaustive. We may also treat it as typical, since substantially similar lists can be compiled from German and Japanese sources.

Moreover, the fact that all the items are put forward, and that first one and then another is specially insisted on, suggests that the Have-nots will not be content until they are all satisfied.

Yet the most casual inspection of the list discloses items which the Haves, as such, are under no sort of duty to satisfy. Prudence or self-interest may counsel either concessions upon these items or resolute resistance to them; justice has nothing to do with it. In national societies, justice requires every possible provision for the material well-being and spiritual satisfaction of the less favoured; it does not require that they should all be raised to the peerage. Similarly I should say, broadly, that in the international society justice requires the Haves to make all reasonable concessions to the desire of the Have-nots for greater material well-being and for a fair share in any altruistic work that the Haves may be doing in other countries. But I should deny that, apart from this, there is any duty whatever upon the Haves to help the Have-nots to become, in the conventional sense, great powers; indeed, it may be their duty in some circumstances under the Covenant and the Pact of Paris, and it may obviously be in their interests, to oppose them.

If this principle of division be sound, there are only three items in the list—(3), (4), and (5)—which justice requires the Haves to consider. Revenge they are under a duty to prevent. The needs of defence and security will always be alleged by any aggressor; and Italy refused to discuss suggestions for securing her in East Africa, on the ground that she must be the sole judge of her requirements. The Have-nots ostentatiously decline any system of collective security because it cramps them in the pursuit of their other ambitions.

The desire for a larger share in the work of spreading

civilization can probably be satisfied in proportion, roughly speaking, as it is disinterested. Something has already been done in admitting Italians and Germans into the medical and educational services in the Mandated Territories, but any form of joint or collective mandate seems unworkable. Still, the Haves could hardly refuse with a good grace to consider this claim; they have talked too much in the past about the white man's burden in connection with their own activities in backward countries. But it may be doubted whether the civilizing motive is either primary or entirely pure, and whether its satisfaction would content the Have-nots. I am not convinced that Japan is in Manchuria solely to hunt bandits. Italy, too, has still a good deal of civilizing to do in her present colonies. I believe that this motive is a strong element in public opinion about colonies, but rather for retaining than for acquiring them. In states, as distinct from individuals, it rarely extends beyond the area of political control. The Have-nots couple a claim to control with their claim to civilize; and there is force in the observation that "there is no record of any stronger nation ever having felt called upon to civilize any people whose soil did not hold valuable natural resources."[2]

The two chief claims that may be put on grounds of justice are the claims to room for surplus population and to colonies as a source of wealth. If it appears upon examination that colonies would neither relieve the population-pressure of the Have-nots nor make them any richer, we may fairly conclude that the claim for colonies is really made for other reasons, and that the Haves will be justified in so treating it. For the sake of clearness, it will be necessary to discuss separately the population aspect and the economic aspect of colonies. But in

[2]N. Peffer, *The White Man's Dilemma*, New York, 1927, p. 72.

practice the two cannot be separated, since the numbers that a colony can absorb depend on economic, as well as on physical, conditions.

II

When we turn to over-population as a basis for a claim upon the Haves, we are met at once by the objection that Italy and Germany are stimulating their populations by every sort of inducement and pressure, while Japan is apparently doing nothing to limit hers. It is hard to see how the Have-nots can base any fair claim upon a condition which they are themselves deliberately creating or permitting; and there is reason to suspect that the condition is being created to serve as a basis for the claim—and for other claims as well. It is by no means certain, either, that any of these countries has in fact succeeded in over-populating itself. Over-population does not depend simply on comparative densities. Germany and Italy do not prove their case merely by comparing their 363 and 344 per square mile with the sparse populations of Canada or parts of Africa, or Japan by pointing out that there are 136 Asiatics per square mile and only 13.5 "Caucasians." On that footing, what about Holland with 659, England with 685, and Belgium with 700? The question is really one of adjustment between population and resources. It may be as true to say of a country that it is economically under-developed or lopsidedly developed as that it is over-populated;[1] and the phenomena of over-population may sometimes be produced or cured, without any change in density, by changes in

[1]"In the home country itself [Italy]. . . it may roughly be estimated that the exploitation of the whole area of land available will provide a means of livelihood at home for a population larger by 17½ millions than the present one" (Attilio Oblath, "Italian Emigration and Colonization Policy," *International Labour Review*, June, 1931, XXIII, pp. 805 *ff.*).

economic policy or shifts in international trade.

If, however, we admit excessive population in all three countries, and overlook the causes of it, the first remedy that will occur to anyone, and especially to any Canadian, is that some of the Haves might adopt a more generous immigration policy. The self-governing Dominions, the United States, the South American countries, have narrowed their doors. Should they not offer to widen them again? There is no doubt about Italy's answer to such an offer. It would be "No," with Fascist scorn. "The Fascist idea is that a large and growing population is an asset and not a handicap."[2] Mussolini explains why: "Sirs, Italy, to count as anything, must arrive on the threshold of the second half of this century with a population not inferior to sixty million inhabitants."[3]

In 1927 and 1928 the Fascist government gave legislative effect to these views by forbidding permanent emigration except in special cases, and even encouraging repatriation.[4] Three quotations will show how useless it would be to offer Italy facilities for emigration:

> We as Fascists must have the courage to declare that emigration is an evil when, as at present, it is directed towards countries under foreign sovereignty. Emigration is necessary, but towards Italian countries and possessions. . . . Why should our race form a kind of human reservoir for the replenishment of the small or declining populations of other nations? Why should our mothers continue to bring into the world children who will grow up into soldiers for other nations? Fascism will cease to encourage emigration, which saps the vital forces of race and state.[5]

> The Prefects should make it clear to all the authorities that

[2]L. Villari, *The Expansion of Italy*, London, 1930, p. 43.

[3]May 26, 1927.

[4]Most of these provisions have been suspended since August, 1930, on account of the depression, but Mussolini has made it clear that the essential policy is unchanged.

[5]Signor Grandi in the Chamber, March 31, 1927 (*Bolletino dell' Emigrazione*, 1927).

those Provinces which succeed in keeping all their sons at home, to work for the national development and defence, will have deserved well of their country.[6]

You will no longer work the ground, no longer grow the fruit, no longer make the roads, no longer build the houses for others. If there should be no room for you in Italy, I will give you another Italy beyond the seas.[7]

Germany, probably, would give the same answer, though she has not, so far as I know, officially said so. The ideas of her present government on this subject are much the same as Italy's, and for the same reasons; and Herr Hitler's own views are clear from *Mein Kampf*.

I doubt whether there is much truth in the suggestion that is sometimes made that these views are a consequence of the closing of doors, and would soon be changed if the Haves opened them again. But suppose that they do open them, and that the immigrants come. Suppose that Canada, as a first instalment of her contribution to the price of peace, admits to-morrow 100,000 Italians or Germans or Japanese; what will happen to them? Shall we send them west to increase our unsold wheat crop? Shall they build us some more railways? Or shall they join the rest of the unemployed in the towns? So it would be everywhere. What would really happen would be that they would not come, at any rate after the letters from the first batch had reached home.

The curious fact is that, with the single exception of Ireland, emigration, however extensive, has always been accompanied by a growth in the home population. It has never proved more than a temporary palliative for a country's population problems. And the idea that it could prove more in the cases we are discussing appears fantastic when we look at the surpluses to be provided for.

[6] *Bolletino dell' Emigrazione*, 1927. [7] Mussolini, September 4, 1935.

During the last few years the average annual excess of births over deaths has been 912,000 in Japan (1929-33), 432,000 in Italy (1930-4), and 307,000 in Germany (1930-3).

Even more fantastic is the idea that an adequate outlet would be provided by colonies. Colonies may provide an outlet for pride, but not for population. In 1913 the German colonies had an area more than five times that of Germany, and Germany had owned most of them for some thirty years. Yet their total white population was only 28,846, of whom about 10,000 were non-Germans. More Germans emigrated in 1913 to the United States alone, and there were several non-German cities in which more Germans were then earning their living than were to be found in the whole German colonial empire. France's colonies, with twenty times the area of France, have a white population of about one and a quarter millions—less than three years' increase in the Italian population; while the white population of the Dutch colonies is about one-half of this increase for a single year. Italy has had her East African colonies for about fifty years and Libya for more than twenty. Their total Italian population is about 40,000, of whom less than 10,000 are on the land.[8]

Italy and Germany say that their present or former colonies are not suitable for white settlement. This may be true; but the contemporary propaganda for their acquisition represented them as eminently suitable, just as Ethiopia is being represented to Italians to-day. There is no better way of deflating both the "demographic" and the economic basis of these colonial claims than to read

[8]Villari (*op. cit.*, p. 87) says: "But even if . . . not more than 200,000 Italians can settle in the colony, or 100,000, it will always be a large and compact mass of Italians residing on the southern shore of the Mediterranean and *will greatly strengthen Italy's position and prestige both from the strategic and political point of view*" [my italics].

the German colonial propaganda of the seventies and eighties[9] and the Italian propaganda in favour of taking Eritrea, Somaliland, and Libya, to compare them with the almost exactly similar outpourings of to-day, and to contrast them with the actual results. "The easiest solution," says Signor Villari airily,[10] "would be for Italy to acquire colonies suitable for white settlers." Where are there such colonies? If England offered Italy the choice of all her colonial possessions, which would Signor Villari choose? Kenya, probably, would be the most suitable. After forty years, it has a white population of less than 20,000. Multiply by twenty to allow for the lower requirements of the Southern Italian labourer, and still you have barely a year of Italy's increase. Yet England is an experienced colonizer; she has vastly more capital to spare for development than Italy; her home population is twice as dense, and she has two million unemployed.

At any rate, suitable or not, this is the only sort of territory that is conceivably in question. It is a cool enough proposal, in the circumstances, that the Haves should hand over any of their colonies. But it would need more than the triple brass of a modern dictator to suggest that any of them should give up part of her home territory to serve as a breeding-ground for his cannon-fodder.

Finally, since we are discussing the price of peace, it is material to ask whether, if some means were found to relieve the population-pressure of the Have-nots, they would forgo their ambitions of expansion and settle down peaceably at home. There is no reason to think so.

[9]M. E. Townsend, *Origins of Modern German Colonialism, 1871-1885*, New York, 1921, and *The Rise and Fall of the German Colonial Empire, 1884-1918*, New York, 1930; P. S. Reinsch, *World Politics*, New York, 1916, pp. 10 *ff.*

[10]*Op. cit.*, p. 43.

Germany was not over-populated during the years when she acquired her colonies. France, an under-populated country with a declining birth-rate, has won in the last couple of generations, at immense cost, a colonial empire second only to England's. Even the United States though not short of room at home, has taken a hand. Apparently, then, pressure of population is not the main cause of the expansionist temper of the Have-nots; certainly it is not the only cause. Is it, after all, peoples that need to expand, or their leaders that want to?

III

The economic claim—the claim to colonies as a source of wealth—is put mainly on the ground of easier and more assured access to (*a*) raw materials and (*b*) markets. At the back of it lies the idea, about which something must be said later, of self-sufficiency in time of war.

We should keep in mind throughout how small a part colonies, in any proper sense of the word, can in the nature of things play in this question, and how much smaller a part they actually do play. With far the greater and richer part of the world the Have-nots deal on precisely the same terms as the Haves. Any advantages enjoyed in this part by any of the Haves is due either to causes (such as geographical position or special aptitudes) which are largely independent of human action, or to some bargain which was not the result of any sort of political ownership or control by the Have concerned over the other party. This is obvious; but it is not so obvious to the average Have-not citizen that this open part of the world includes the greater part of what he knows collectively as the British Empire. He does not distinguish between self-governing Dominions, Crown Colonies, Pro-

tectorates, and Mandates. How should he? They are all red on the map. Try to convince him that England does not in some way "exploit" Canada—indeed, that it is sometimes rather the other way round. He simply thinks that you are "making British propaganda." Still less does he know how far India controls her own tariffs and currency. Thus his rulers, who do know, easily arouse in him the desired response by talking, with suitable vagueness, about "England rich in colonies."

Even as to colonies properly so called, there are one or two points to be noted. Some of what used to be Turkish possessions, and the larger and economically more important part of the former German colonies, are administered under mandates which require the mandatory to ensure complete economic, commercial, and industrial opportunity to the nationals of all other members of the League. A great belt right across Central Africa is covered by treaties providing for the Open Door. Japan has the benefit of these treaties, and Italy can have it whenever she chooses to ratify; Germany would have it now if she had adhered when she was a member of the League, and could get it if she again became a member.[1] Holland maintains the Open Door in all her colonies.

So much in order to reduce colonial raw materials and markets to something like their proper proportions. The question at issue must now be clearly stated, since a good deal of the propaganda tends to confuse it with a wider and quite different question. It is not whether the

[1]This belt, known as the Conventional Free-trade Basin of the Congo, includes (besides the mandated German colonies mentioned above) parts of Portuguese West Africa and French Equatorial Africa, all Belgian Congo, Uganda, Kenya, and Nyasaland, and parts of Northern Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Italian Somaliland. The treaties are the Berlin Act of 1885, the Brussels Act of 1890, and the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye of September 10, 1919. Though the legal position is as stated, in practice Germany and Italy can get considerable benefit as it is.

advanced countries as a group profit by the exploitation and development of the more backward ones. It is whether it is economically better for a given country to acquire and develop colonies of its own or to let some other country do it.

On the debit side of the account, the governing country has, besides the cost of acquisition, all the overhead expense, which includes the whole cost of administration and defence and most of the cost of development. This overhead expense is not negligible. The subsidies paid by Germany to meet deficits in her colonial budgets for the thirty years 1884-1914 amounted to 867.5 million marks; in the last five of these years, in spite of a rapid increase in the trade of the colonies, the subsidies were still averaging 30 million marks a year; and the colonies must certainly be charged with part of the cost of the German navy. A like story can be told of other colonial empires.[2] Japan's empire has been, and is, an enormous strain on her finances, and it is still an open question whether they will crack under it. If Italy's colonial balance-sheet to date were that of a private enterprise, no court would refuse a winding-up order.

Does the governing country get its money's worth? Even in Open Door or Mandated Territory it has certain advantages, and it usually gets the largest share of the trade. But it is easy to exaggerate its advantages; and

[2]The deficits in Belgium's colonial budget for the five years 1931-5 averaged 175 million francs a year, though the budget for 1935 includes 165 million of "extraordinary" revenue; the total colonial debt is 3,785 million francs. Holland's annual colonial deficits for the three years 1933-5 averaged 82 million guilders, and her funded colonial debt is 1,215 million guilders. It is doubtful whether these figures show the whole expense. The net charge on the French treasury for colonies during the years 1926-32 showed an average annual increase of 240 million francs and averaged 1,618 million francs a year; in the last of these years it was 2,403 million francs—about 20 per cent. of the gross value of the trade in that year between France and her colonies.

part—generally a large part—of its share of the trade it would get anyway if it wanted it. So far, at any rate, the mandatories have lost money, and any power taking over a mandate would have to hold it on the same terms.

Colonial propagandists like to express the benefits to the governing country in absolute figures; they look more impressive so. But in view of the point at issue, such figures mean little. The question is what proportion of the governing country's total external trade is with its colonies, and what proportion it gets of the total external trade of those colonies. The rest goes to other countries, while it alone bears the cost of acquisition and the overhead expense. In the years 1910-3 Germany's trade with her colonies was about 0.5 per cent. of her own external trade, and she got 40 per cent. of the external trade of her colonies. For Holland in 1928 the corresponding proportions were 6.5 per cent. and less than 12 per cent.; and her colonies did not help her much in the depression, for in 1933 the proportions were 3.5 per cent. and 13 per cent. Belgium in the two years 1927-8 got 46 per cent. of the external trade of Belgian Congo, but this was only just over 2 per cent. of her own external trade. By 1933 Belgium's share had risen to 67 per cent., but the total to be shared had fallen by 65 per cent.[3]

The objection that these are all Open Door colonies is largely irrelevant, since most of the colonies that Germany or Italy could hope to get from the Haves are also Open Door, either because they form part of the

[3]When analysed a little, these figures are still less comforting to the propagandist. For both Holland and Belgium, the proportions for imports from the colonies are lower than for exports to them; there seems to be some exaggeration about "colonial raw materials." And when you look at the nature of the exports to the colonies, and then at the colonial debts and deficits, it becomes plain, especially in the case of Belgium, that a large part of these exports is for development and public works, and is paid for not by the colony, but by the governing country itself.

Conventional Congo Basin or because they are held under mandates. Let us, however, without going through the complicated intermediate gradation of colonial preferences turn for a moment to the other extreme. France has pursued the policy of "assimilating" her colonies to her own tariff-system; economically, these assimilated colonies form part of France. In 1929 France got about 55 per cent. of the total external trade of her colonies, but this was only 15 per cent. of her own external trade. Her trade with her colonies had steadily increased, but that between her colonies and foreign countries had increased much faster, rising from less than 50 per cent. of their trade with France in 1899 to about 85 per cent. in 1929. Only about 10 per cent. of France's imported raw materials came from her colonies. During the depression, the ratio of France's colonial trade to her total external trade has risen sharply, reaching 27 per cent. in 1933, and probably more now; but this has not been due to any increase in colonial trade, which has declined, but to the huge decrease in the total external trade of France. Moreover, in the two years 1932-3, though she got over 50 per cent. of her imported food-products from her colonies, she got from them only 6 per cent. of her imported raw materials. With the possible exceptions of wines and spirits from North Africa and about half her imported fish, it does not appear that France gets any of her imports from her colonies cheaper than she could get them either elsewhere or from the same territories if some other country owned them.[4]

[4]Most of my figures for France are from C. Southworth, *The French Colonial Venture*, London, 1931, and the Conseil National Economique, *Les Relations Economiques entre la France et ses Colonies*, Paris, 1934. Mr. Southworth, I think, fairly establishes his conclusion that "the French colonies, from an economic point of view, have been an unprofitable venture for France, and will probably remain so for many years to come." A. Vallet (*Un Nouvel Aperçu du Problème Colonial*, Paris, 1925), taking as his criterion the interests of the French taxpayer, reaches a rather similar conclusion.

All this leaves still untouched the question: What part of this colonial trade is really attributable to political ownership of the colonies? The question is vital, since the part that the governing country could have got in any event is irrelevant. Unfortunately, no accurate answer is possible. Evidently the answer would vary widely in different cases, and even in any specific case would be largely guesswork. But the amount of trading that is done with other people's colonies, and the high proportion of the trade of a given country often enjoyed by another without any political connection between them, suggest that, if an accurate estimate could be made, the figures already given would look even less impressive than they do.

On a broader view, these colonial trade statistics show how strong is the tendency of economic benefits from colonial development by any one country to spread to "all nations integrated in the world's trading régime."[5] Discriminatory tariffs and the like are of limited efficacy in checking this tendency. Moreover, attempts to retain an abnormal share of colonial trade prove economically injurious to the governing country; and they are apt to cause unrest (and consequent rise in the cost of administration and defence) in the colonies. The facts also indicate that, if Sir Samuel Hoare is right in thinking that the real basis of the grievance of the Have-nots is "the fear of monopoly—of the withholding of essential raw materials," it should be possible to satisfy them. It does not appear that there is any present danger of such monopoly, or any reason why the Haves should not give adequate guarantees against it.

It seems, therefore, that in this field there is a good

[5]Southworth, *op. cit.*, p. 4. *Cf.* Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*, New York, 1926, pp. 92 *ff.*, 546 *ff.*

deal to be said for the policy of letting George do it. Especially for the Have-nots, if their motives were primarily economic, this would appear to be the sound policy. They have no capital to spare for the business of extensive colonial development, which requires large immediate outlay and brings slow returns. They need all they have at home. If Italy or Germany embarked on this business, it is reasonably certain that, far from raising the standard of living at home, they would lower it for at least a generation.

The Have-nots, and particularly Germany, answer that most of these objections to owning colonies yourself are beside the mark for them. To tell us, they say, that the countries with raw materials are only too anxious to sell them to anyone who will buy, and that the trade of most of the world is open to us on the same terms as to the Haves, is like telling a man with no money that he is perfectly free to go shopping. Colonial open doors are of little use to us. For everything that we buy abroad we must pay in gold, of which we have none to spare, or in foreign currency, which we can get only by selling our goods abroad. Thus we can import only to the extent that we can export; and tariffs, quotas, and the like, not simply in colonies but everywhere, are making exports more and more difficult for us. Just in so far, therefore, as we could trade with our own colonies in our own money, we should be better off.[6]

Even if we accept this argument at its face value, it does not support an economic claim to colonial ownership. The volume of trade with any colonies that Germany or Italy can hope to acquire by peaceable means (the cost

[6]For countries with over-valued currencies, such as Italy and (probably) Germany, it would in reality be economically disadvantageous to buy in their own currency areas.

of war rules out for this purpose all others) would make hardly any difference. And what saving it did make in gold and foreign exchange would not compensate the overhead expense, mentioned above, which would be necessary to obtain that saving; for there is a limit to the outlay even of paper marks that can be justified economically by the saving of each gold mark. The figures already given make this fairly plain. Current experience confirms it. Currencies have not proved notably more solid, or the balance of payments easier, in countries with colonies than in those without. The special difficulties of Germany and Italy are not due in any appreciable degree to lack of colonies, but largely to their own economic policies; and they are remediable, so far as they are remediable at all without a change in those policies, not by acquisition of colonies, but only by greater freedom of world-trade.

I think that there is a more fundamental reason why colonies would do little to satisfy the material needs of the Have-nots. They complain that they came too late to the feast, when all the best helpings were gone. But they are too late now in a different sense. The helpings are not what they used to be; the best days of imperialism are past. Owing partly to an awakened public conscience and partly to an aroused native consciousness, there are limits now to the crude gutting of a colony, using the natives as tools. Besides, you now want the colony not only as a source of raw materials, but as a market. You must therefore "raise up the natives to the point where they have gotten purchasing power."[7] You must pay

[7] I owe this pleasing phrase to a former president of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce. Addressing President Calles of Mexico at a reception by the Chamber, he said: "Sir, you have done the noblest work that God entrusts to mortal man. You have raised up ten million people to the point where they have gotten purchasing power." The idea is made more vivid by Major H. A.

them decent wages and educate them to wider desires. But, as you do that, two things are likely to happen. You increase the cost of your raw materials; and you arouse in the natives other than immediate material desires. They begin to want to buy their needs in the cheapest market and sell their products in the dearest (neither of which may be yours), and, generally, more and more to manage their own affairs. It becomes increasingly difficult and expensive to prevent them from doing so. Your economic "ownership" of your colony becomes less and less substantial, and probably, though more slowly, your political ownership as well. This dilemma has always been inherent in modern imperialism, but formerly the imperialist powers had a longer and more profitable run for their money than they can get now.

In truth, this whole economic argument for owning colonies seems to me to misread the colonial history of the last seventy-five years. Modern colonial expansion, in its economic aspect, has been rather a result of riches than of poverty—a symptom of prosperity rather than a cause.

IV

At this stage, two questions naturally suggest themselves. Since the Haves cling to their colonies, and seem —or at any rate seemed as lately as 1919—as anxious as ever to acquire more, must there not be something wrong about the argument that colonies do not pay? If, on the other hand, the argument is right, ought not the Haves to be the more willing to relinquish some of their colonial possessions to the Have-nots? They may know them

Chisholm, Canadian trade commissioner to Cuba, in a report on *Mexico as a Field for Exports*, Ottawa, 1921: "The simplest of its inhabitants will begin to purchase . . . agricultural machinery . . . preserves, cheap decorative articles, and musical instruments, gramophones, *etc.*"

to be an expensive form of ostentation, but if the Have-nots want them and would be kept quiet by them, why not? The point of these questions is a little blunted, though it is not turned, by three considerations. Many of the current economic ideas about colonies, as of those about war, are survivals from a time when, though not wholly true, they were much nearer the truth than they are to-day. As so often happens, the facts have changed faster than the ideas. Secondly, though colonies do not pay the governing country, they may pay individual, and influential, elements in it. The main items of cost are distributed *pro rata* among the governing population; the profits are not. In short, there are vested interests. Thirdly, even for the governing country as a whole there are obvious purely material reasons against relinquishing colonies, which are no reasons at all for acquiring them.

I shall risk the jeers of the hard-boiled persons who call themselves realists, and add that, in my belief, some of the Haves would be deterred from handing over some of their colonies by concern for the welfare of the native inhabitants. I know that professions of this concern are an old story, and that they have too often in the past been belied by conduct. Perhaps the change is an illustration of Mr. Spender's remark that men tend in the long run to live up to their hypocrisies. It may be (though I do not think so) that the views of the "insiders" have not changed, but that public opinion has come to take their repeated professions at their face value and to insist that they be fulfilled. Certainly the mandates system and the work of the Mandates Commission have had an influence far beyond their own sphere. Whatever the reasons, I believe that concern for the natives is now genuine and dominant to a degree that would have surprised the last

generation; that it is becoming more so every year; and that it will present a serious obstacle to any scheme for redistribution of colonies. There is more in this than the natural feeling of each people that its own methods are best. The four leading colonial Haves are democratic countries, and it seems most unlikely that public opinion in these countries would tolerate the idea of turning over "our natives" to Fascists or Nazis.

Still, these obstacles, even the last, might be overcome, and it might be difficult for the Haves—especially after 1919—to insist upon them, if they obstructed the paramount interest of peace. Nevertheless, even though the Haves can give no better reasons for wanting to keep their colonies than the Have-nots for wanting to acquire them, even though the reasons on both sides be substantially the same, and have nothing to do with civilization, surplus population or communal economic benefit, still it does not follow that the Haves should agree to a redistribution. That depends upon what the real reasons are. We have eliminated the only reasons that involve justice. But self-interest may still dictate that the Haves should retain their colonies; and broader considerations may raise grave doubts whether concessions now would really make permanent peace more likely. It seems to me that that is in fact the position.

I do not believe that the high-placed proponents of the economic reasons for acquiring colonies have themselves any faith in them. It is, to my mind, incredible that Mussolini is trying to conquer Ethiopia, or that some Nazi leaders[1] want the German colonies back, on economic

[1]Not Hitler himself, unless he has changed his mind since writing *Mein Kampf*. He then thought that Germany's colonial policy had been a mistake, and that she must win by the sword in "Continental Europe" the space that she needs.

grounds. They use the economic argument, as they use the arguments about civilization and population, to tickle the ears of the groundlings who will have to pay. Their own motives are neither altruistic, nor "demographic," nor economic.

V

The real reasons why the Have-nots want colonies—as also, in the main, why the Haves are reluctant to part with them—are power and prestige. They want to be strong and great. So high an authority as Professor Rappard[1] puts it thus: "Colonies . . . hardly pay any more nowadays; yet colonial ambition has not sensibly diminished. It seems that, to be a Great Power in the eyes of the world, it is not enough to have a large population, or great wealth, or even some big battleships. You must also have colonies. That, far more than alleged economic or demographic needs, is the reason why at least one Great Power now wants to re-constitute her colonial empire and another to enlarge hers." But he adds: "If that is the true explanation of the origin of colonies—and I think it is the only sound one—, it is not the ground upon which they are justified. Though the thirst for prestige still plays a considerable part—and almost always a sinister one—in the modern world, it can scarcely be invoked any longer in our democratic age [1932] to justify a policy of conquest."

Considerations of power probably weigh more with the Haves than with the Have-nots. The Haves want garrisons and naval and air bases to protect their outlying possessions and their communications with them.

[1]The distinguished Swiss economist, the first director of the mandates section of the League of Nations until 1926, and since 1925 a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission. My quotations are translated from an address on *Le Problème des Colonies et des Mandats*, Bucharest, 1932.

They think, too, of the threat which some of their colonies might constitute in the hands of some other power. To France, her colonies are also of great and growing importance as a source of man-power. For the Have-nots, the main object under this head seems to be self-sufficiency in time of war.[2] It is clear that for them[3] this object is economically unattainable. But why in the name of "realism" should the Haves contribute to the power of the Have-nots? And what would such a contribution have to do with the price of peace? Self-sufficiency in war is a desirable asset to a nation that wants to pursue a "dynamic" policy, and a useful insurance against sanctions. So are battleships—and both minister to prestige as well as to power; but it has not so far been suggested that the Haves should hand over part of their fleets. Yet a claim to colonies for this purpose might reasonably be accompanied by a request for warships, since self-sufficiency from colonies, even if economically possible, would be strategically illusory without command of the sea.

The motive of prestige, on the other hand, is stronger with the Have-nots than with the Haves. Naturally, since they are the climbers—the Mrs. Initorr Dedd's and the Mrs. O'Hellwyth Manners's—of international society. Almost all their propaganda about other motives, however literally their peoples swallow it, is either a conscious cloak for, or a rationalization of, this motive. Only three

[2]Villari (*op. cit.*, p. 49) says that Italy "hopes some day to emancipate herself from the cotton tribute to the United States." He is not an economist; but so intelligent a man could hardly have crammed so much economic nonsense into a single sentence if he had been thinking in economic terms. No doubt Italy and Germany have also ideas, partly strategic and partly political, of "raising the value of their friendship." Japan has evident strategic objects.

[3]Or, probably, for any other country (Simonds and Emeny, *op. cit.*, *passim.*; Moon, *op. cit.*, pp. 551 *ff.*; Sir T. Holland, *The Mineral Sanction*, London, 1935; C. K. Leith, *World Minerals and World Politics*, New York, 1931).

weeks before he attacked Ethiopia, Mussolini said: "At heart I really care less for these material advances [housing, roads, *etc.*] than to see a change in the spirit of man. If economic changes are to do good, there must be a change of spirit, to give significance and permanent value to any improved standard of living. A nation would not in the long run be happier or better for an extra pair of boots and a little more butter all round. In Italy, as perhaps nowhere else, a spiritual change has occurred."[4] Hitler takes the same view, and claims, as his main achievement, a similar change of spirit in Germany. Germany is tightening her belt, going short of butter, and lowering her standard of living, in order to build up her armaments. When Germans ruefully murmur,

> Fünfzig Pfennig ein Ei, Herr Ley,
> Zwanzig Pfennig ein Hering, Herr Göring,
> Achtzig Pfennig die Äppels (Äpfel), Herr Goebbels:
> Es wird immer dürer (teuerer), mein Führer,

"What of it?" answers the Führer. "It is for the Honour and Greatness of Germany."

Now if this thirst for prestige is at the bottom of the desire of the Have-nots for expansion, what reason is there of conscience or common sense why the Haves should satisfy it? More—how could they? It is insatiable, and grows with gratification. It is irrational and non-material, and cannot be assuaged by any rational policy of material concessions. The story of modern imperialism is one long proof of this. "No self-respecting country can permit itself to be less voracious than any other."[5]

[4]Interview with Sir A. Wilson, September 14, 1935 (*Nineteenth Century and After*, October, 1935).

[5]Peffer, *op. cit.*, p. 54. *Cf.* Treitschke, *Politics*: "Every virile nation has established colonial power."

And one fact stares us stubbornly in the face. In 1914 Germany was not over-populated. She combined, in a degree to which neither she nor any other European power can reasonably aspire now, wealth, power, and prestige. Currencies were stable. International trade flowed, by comparison with to-day, freely; and she was steadily increasing her share of it. She had her colonies, still largely undeveloped. She had, in short, everything that the Have-nots now claim, and more than they can fairly expect to get. But the result was not peace.[6]

VI

Accordingly, if the Haves make up their minds that they must attempt to meet in some way the grievances of the Have-nots, their attempts are likely to be mistaken and futile unless they clearly recognize that these grievances are not really economic, but political. Yet to make political concessions to them, now that Germany has her "equal status," would be probably useless and certainly wrong—useless because ambitions would be whetted rather than appeased, and wrong because the only hope of reasonable international relations lies in eliminating such ambitions. No nation has any inherent right to be a great power, or can win one by multiplying its population and its armaments and intoxicating its people. Any nation that seeks by such means to acquire a nuisance-value must expect to be treated as a nuisance; the Covenant and the Pact of Paris, as I understand them,

[6] I do not mean by this to beg any questions about the causes of, or responsibility for, the War, but simply to note the fact that, in the circumstances stated, war did happen. Those who attribute a primary responsibility to Russia do not suggest that her main object was material prosperity. She was pursuing her historic mission of "protecting" Slavs and dominating the Straits. Would material concessions have satisfied Serbia, or Austria-Hungary?

require that it should be so treated. In international society the gate-crasher must be firmly discouraged.

It is not my purpose to deny that some of the Have-nots have legitimate political grievances. These legitimate grievances, however, lie rather in Europe than in the colonies; nor are they confined to the great or the near-great among the Have-nots. A conception of justice which applies only to nations above a certain size holds no promise; no better international order can be created so long as the chance that grievances will get a hearing is proportionate to the force behind them. I do not seek, either, to belittle the economic troubles of the Have-nots. My point in this article is that these troubles are not the true reason for the claims of the Have-nots to colonial possessions, and would not be alleviated, but rather aggravated, by concessions to these claims. For the rest, these troubles, too, are common to both small and great among the Have-nots—and to most of the Haves as well. No doubt, a wider and more widespread opening of colonial doors would help. What is really needed is a reversal of the policy (to which Germany and Italy have contributed their full share) of economic nationalism, so that world-trade as a whole may flow more freely.

Such a reversal is as little to be expected in the present temper of the nations (to which also the Have-nots are making their full contribution) as is a fair consideration of political grievances. Indeed, it seems to me extremely doubtful whether, in the interests of peace, it is even to be desired. Rather it seems fortunate that, while the collective organization of peace is still undeveloped, economic difficulties should be at least some check on political ambitions. To say that "parity in prosperity is the price of peace" is to put the cart before the horse,

and to take small account of history. Peace otherwise assured may bring prosperity, but I see little reason to believe that prosperity will bring an assurance of peace. Rather I apprehend that, if Jeshuron waxes fat, he will kick harder than ever.

It follows that the first step in any settlement between Haves and Have-nots is to make it clear beyond hope of dispute that nothing is to be gained by violence. If, for the present, that can be done only by organizing overwhelming force against any aggressor, then, however reluctantly, the League must make this organization its first business. It is true that the League can have no hopeful future as a mere instrument for maintaining the privileges of the Haves. But neither can it as an agency for levying international blackmail.

It is useless to try to deal with people who base their claims on Historic Missions, Manifest Destinies, or the Glories of Imperial Rome; and dangerous to make concessions to such claims. Not until it is plain that peaceful negotiation offers the only prospect of concessions will it be worth while to negotiate, or will claims be stated definitely and exhaustively; and it should be a condition of any concessions that those receiving them should join the collective organization of security. Then, and only then, will the Haves be able to pay the price of peace with a reasonable assurance of getting value for their money.

GIOSUE CARDUCCI AS A ROMANTIC

MARIO PRAZ

GIOSUE CARDUCCI was born at Valdicastello, in the district of Pietrasanta in Versilia, on July 27, 1835. The poet's centenary has been celebrated in Italy with speeches and articles, and has seen the publication of the first volumes of the National Edition of his works. The year 1935 was indeed an *anno carducciano* for Italy, and such it was thanks to one aspect, certainly the most typical of this poet, which makes him popular in Italy's present hour.

This aspect may be summed up in two words: the *romanità* and the sanity of Carducci. I have had the opportunity of listening to several commemorations by Italians of different ages, and whether they were senior academicians such as Ugo Ojetti,[1] or public figures of the Fascist era such as Arturo Marpicati,[2] or young students, stress was laid over and over again on those two characteristics: the *romanità* and the sanity of Carducci. Side by side with the public celebrations, tending to emphasize one sole aspect of Carducci, the "out-and-out Italian who made no concessions to any kind of exoticism"—as Marpicati puts it—, it may be enlightening to quote from an article by Professor Attilio Momigliano, published in the *Corriere della Sera* of June 6, 1935, with the title *Sanità di Carducci*. This article, by an academic critic, is not written for a rhetorical effect like the speeches mentioned above: it aims

[1]Commemoration held at Bologna on June 25, 1935, reproduced in part in the *Corriere della Sera* as *La romanità e la fede di Giosue Carducci*, and printed in its entirety in *Pan* (July, 1935) as *Carducci e noi*.

[2]Inaugural lecture at the University of Rome on the theme *La passione politica di G. Carducci*, partly reprinted in the *Corriere della Sera*, March 9, 1935.

at being an unimpassioned survey of Carducci's art. "After having scornfully censured romantic poetry," Momigliano says, "Carducci found, through a slow process of liberation from models, rhetorical effects, and attitudes, the kind of poetry which flashed across his mind as a contrast to the formlessness, sentimentality, and morbidity of romanticism." He goes on specifying: "It is significant that among so much historical poetry, there is never in Carducci the theme of ruins and silence as a note of melancholy and neglect." He gives instances from *Dinanzi alle terme di Caracalla*, etc., makes a comparison with D'Annunzio, the romantic singer of the Cities of Silence, and concludes: "Carducci has been able to sing the Communes and pagan Rome; he could not have sung Ravenna, a harbour whence the soul sails forth towards the realms of contemplation and death, nor the Venice of the forsaken canals, dripping with melancholy like a sonata of Chopin or a picture by Böcklin."

This allusion to Böcklin, who was after all a mediocre painter, recalls to my mind the essay of another professor, Cesare De Lollis, who in the now very distant 1912, in contrasting a famous passage from *Alle fonti del Clitunno* with Leopardi's "Già di candide Ninfe i rivi albergo. . ." ("Streams, once the abode of white Nymphs," from *Alla Primavera o Delle Favole Antiche*), remarked[3] that the whole stanza of Leopardi "is a miraculous selection of themes of the mythico-pastoral world interpreted with the concreteness which Böcklin brought to the interpretation of that world;" whereas in Carducci's lines,

> Egli dal cielo, autoctona virago
> ella. . .

[3] *Appunti sulla lingua poetica del Carducci*, in *Saggi sulla forma poetica italiana dell' Ottocento*, Bari, 1929.

("From heaven he, she an autochthonous heroine . . ."), "there is nothing either seen by the poet or to be seen by the reader." For Momigliano, therefore, Böcklin stands for "the formlessness and morbidity of romanticism;" for De Lollis, on the contrary, he signifies romantic "concreteness" as opposed to the abstractions of academic poetry. If two professors of this century, when romanticism has been so thoroughly explored, cannot see eye to eye upon the subject, Carducci may well be excused for having formed no clear idea of it by the middle of the last century, for having defined as classical certain aspirations we would rather call romantic, for having kept confused, sometimes in a hardly extricable manner, an authentic classical inspiration, from Horace, with a pseudo-classical, or rather romantic, Parnassian one.

Modern Italians who, like Marpicati, isolate the first of these inspirations, and connect it with Fascism, act legitimately; the same cannot be said, in my opinion, of Momigliano's confusing of the two tendencies, and labelling them: *sanità di Carducci*.

And since Böcklin's name has been mentioned, his art, bearing an unmistakable stamp of pagan romanticism, may be conveniently used to describe the pseudo-classicism that throve in the second half of the nineteenth century, of which we find so many instances in Carducci. Whoever compares the mythological subjects of the painters of the Premier Empire, such as Prud'hon, Guérin, Gérard, with Böcklin's mythological subjects, will at once notice the difference between the striving of the first to render as real presences such forms as embody a metaphysical idea of beauty, and the attempt of the second to steep in a dreamland atmosphere forms partaking of common humanity. Böcklin's "concreteness"

is, however, only apparent: his fleshy nymphs, his wild tritons and centaurs are realistically treated precisely in order to emphasize that wistful yearning, that *Sehnsucht* which emanates from the whole scene, from the skies either impossibly blue or stormy, from the bewitched waters, from the trees now throbbing with the sap of a rank springtide, now gilded by the touch of a preternatural sunset. Böcklin's painting is indeed a painting of *Sehnsucht*, of conscious yearning after a *fata morgana*, which hovers—a shifting enchantment—on the verge of nothingness. It is a painting of desire and regret, not of pure contemplation.

How different the attitude of the painters of the Premier Empire towards mythology! They aimed at establishing canons, not at dreaming visions. Theirs was still the Roman classicism, an actual presence. Mythology was a part of everyday experience, the ancient world came to life again in fashion, in dress, in furnishing, in politics; Napoleon was one of the Caesars, *Alexander redivivus*; heroes could be seen walking about the streets, the battlefields of Europe were a match for the fights beneath the walls of Troy, and whoever compared the fair mistresses or wives of the brave with the heroines and goddesses of antiquity, did nothing but show the survival of the past in the present. This may well be called a masquerade of heroes; but fantasy found, in putting it into practice, a fulfilment untroubled by nostalgia. Fantasy idolized a present, did not hearken back to an irretrievable past. In other words, the classicism of the Premier Empire is, it may be said, academic, but not exotic.

Quite another thing is the Hellenism, or rather the Hellenic dream that haunted Europe by the middle of the last century. This, by way of contrast, I propose to

call *Hellenism*, *Second Empire*: Second Empire, a period no longer heroic like the Napoleonic one, but democratic, bourgeois, where no antique masquerade was possible in practical life. Rather, everyday life seemed such a shabby affair in that first, gloomy phase of the industrial era, controlled by steam (in comparison with which the modern phase, controlled by power, looks so bright), that the souls of the artists sought refuge and forgetfulness in a dream-world of their minds: forgetfulness from the disappointments of political revolutions, 1830 and 1848, refuge from the growing squalor of towns, from the growing meanness of familiar and social life. Instead of a classical masquerade, they had a classical opium den: *le rêve hellénique*.[4] This did not hark back to the Alexandrian tradition (for in the Alexandrian is implied also the Roman), but rather to the tradition of the great German romantics, Goethe, Schiller, for whom the Mediterranean was a dream, the South a *fata morgana*, mythology an exotic thing, the whole seasoned by the yearning to see of people who are in darkness: *Sehnsucht*. Böcklin signifies such exoticism placed within reach of all: opium made cheap, the wistful vision of a vanished world made easy to conjure up by the thousand Madame Bovarys of a gray, industrial, and democratic era. "La beauté sereine et tranquille de l'art grec paraissait exprimer merveilleusement les nouveaux besoins d'apaisement"—according to the formula of one of the most penetrating students of Neo-Hellenism, René Canat.[5]

[4]Of the drug-like nature of this pseudo-classicism Carducci himself seems to warn us in the poem which introduces the *Odi barbare*, *Ideale:* "Since a soothing vapour of ambrosia, shed from thy cup, has enwrapped me, O Hebe, smilingly vanished with a goddess' step, I no longer feel on my head the shadow of Time or of cold Care; I feel, O Hebe, hellenic life flow tranquil through my veins." One notices in these lines the elusive, romantic image, typical of an opium dream, of "smilingly vanished" Hebe.

[5]*Une Forme du Mal du Siècle, Du sentiment de la solitude morale chez les Romantiques et les Parnassiens*, Paris, 1907 (conclusion).

I have chosen instances from the painters, but the contrast between *classicism*, *Premier Empire*, and *pseudo-classic romanticism*, *Second Empire*, may well be illustrated by two quotations from Italian poets, the first from Ugo Foscolo's famous Ode to Luigia Pallavicini, the second from Carducci's *Primavera Dorica.*

When Foscolo says to the fair lady,

> I balsami beati
> Per te le Grazie apprestino,
> Per te i lini odorati
> Che a Citerea porgeano
> Quando profano spino
> Le punse il piè divino,
>
> Or te piangon gli Amori,
> Te fra le dive liguri
> Regina e diva! e fiori
> Votivi all'ara portano
> D'onde il grand'arco suona
> Del figlio di Latona . . . ;[6]

when Foscolo evokes these Graces and Loves to minister to the fair patient, he does not strike any nostalgic note. In order to understand fully the note of actuality which is in these lines, one needs only remember that Graces and Loves were familiar presences no less in the rooms of a lady of the Premier Empire than in those of a Roman or Pompeian lady: they were in the *appliques* of the furniture designed after classical models, they were the candle-bearing Cupids and the Graces supporting a clock or running in a fair frieze round the crown of a chandelier. The images of the poet came natural in a period when

[6] "Let the Graces prepare for thee the blessed balsams, for thee the scented linen they spread for Cytherea when a sacrilegious thorn pricked her divine foot. . . . Now Loves weep for thee, thou queen and goddess among Ligurian deities! and they bring votive flowers to the altar whence thunders the mighty bow of Latona's son."

the night-table was called *somno*, the cheval-glass *psyché*, the arm-chair an *agrippine*, the incense-burner and the wash-stand *athénienne*, a period when the bed imitated an altar surmounted by a temple-shaped baldaquin.

But read side by side with Foscolo's lines a similar evocation of mythological beings made by Carducci for a fair lady:

Ti rapirò nel verso; e tra i sereni
Ozi de le campagne a mezzo il giorno,
Tacendo e rifulgendo in tutti i seni
Ciel, mare, intorno,

Io per te sveglierò da i colli aprichi
Le Driadi bionde sovra il piè leggero
E ammiranti a le tue forme gli antichi
Numi d'Omero.

Muoiono gli altri dèi: di Grecia i numi
Non sanno occaso; ei dormon ne' materni
Tronchi e ne' fiori, sopra i monti i fiumi
I mari eterni.

A Cristo in faccia irrigidì ne i marmi
Il puro fior di lor bellezze ignude:
Ne i carmi, o Lina, spira sol ne i carmi
Lor gioventude;

E se gli evòca d'una bella il viso
Innamorato o d'un poeta il core,
Da la santa natura ei con un riso
Lampeggian fuore. . . .[7]

[7] "I will carry thee away on the wings of poetry; and among the serene idleness of the noonday fields, while the sky and sea around silently glow in all their quarters, I will awake for thee from the sunlit hills the fair-haired Dryads light of foot, and the ancient Homeric gods enraptured by thy form. The other deities die: those of Greece know of no setting; they sleep in the maternal trees and flowers, on the mountains, streams, and seas eternal. In the face of Christ there froze in the marble the pure bloom of their naked beauties: only in songs, O Lina, only in songs breathes their youth; and if the face of a woman in love or the heart of a poet evokes them, they flash with a laughter out from holy nature."

Whereas Foscolo's evocation was thoroughly urban and Alexandrian, and Graces and Loves appeared as familiar ministering presences, we notice at once that in Carducci nymphs and deities are conceived as spirits of a natural scene, and that scene is a romantic one; it is the Holy Nature of Rousseau and his numberless followers, the holy pagan Nature which the Parnassians represented as cursed by Christianity.

> Da la santa natura ei con un riso
> Lampeggian fuore. . . .

This sudden laughter of deities surging from the serene idleness of the noonday fields, while the sky and sea silently glow in all their quarters, with a silence and a glow which the music of the verse conveys to us as immense, this surging laughter of deities which wants to be so thundering and is so pathetically distant and hollow, is exactly the laughter of Böcklin's nymphs, tritons, and centaurs; these Greek gods of Carducci, who know of no setting, are indeed *die Götter Griechenlands* of Schiller, *schöne Wesen aus dem Fabelland*, conjured up by the German poet with many a sigh and *Ach*! of yearning:

> Schöne Welt, wo bist du? Kehre wieder,
> Holdes Blüthenalter der Natur!
> Ach, nur in dem Feenland der Lieder
> Lebt noch deine fabelhafte Spur.
> Ausgestorben trauert das Gefilde,
> Keine Gottheit zeigt sich meinem Blick;
> Ach, von jenem lebenwarmen Bilde
> Blieb der Schatten nur zurück.[8]

[8] "O lovely world, where art thou? Come back, splendid prime of Nature! Alas, thy legendary imprint lives on only in the fairyland of song. The stricken countryside saddens; no divinity shows itself to my eyes. Alas, of that life-warm vision only the shadow was left behind."

The contrast between the mirth of the pagan world, and the gloom of the Christian, is already in Schiller:

> Finstrer Ernst und trauriges Entsagen
> War aus eurem heitern Dienst verbannt. . . .
>
> Damals trat kein grässliches Gerippe
> Vor das Bett des Sterbenden. . . .[9]

And if Schiller pined with many an *Ach*! for this vanished fairyland, Carducci did not spare his *Ahi*! This longing *Ahi*! of *Sehnsucht* we find at the end of a phantasmagoria of Nature suggesting Böcklin. The Oreads—visions of an opium dream—speak thus to the poet's friend:

> Poi nosco ti addurrem ne le fulgenti
> De l'ametista grotte e del cristallo,
> Ove eterno le forme e gli elementi
> Temprano un ballo.
>
> T'immergerem ne i fiumi ove il concento
> De' cigni i cori de le Naidi aduna:
> Su l'acque i fianchi tremolan d'argento
> Come la luna.[10]

[9] "Gloomy sternness and sad renunciation were banished from your blithe service. . . . Then no fearful skeleton came before the death-bed." Schiller's conception passes on to Leconte de Lisle (*Hypatie*), Swinburne (*Hymn to Proserpine*, *Dolores*), *etc.* Leconte de Lisle's lines on the pagan virgin martyr:

> Dors, ô blanche victime, en notre âme profonde, . . .
> Dors! l'impure laideur est la reine du monde,
> Et nous avons perdu le chemin de Paros.
> Les Dieux sont en poussière et la terre est muette:
> Rien ne parlera plus dans ton ciel déserté.
> Dors! mais, vivante en lui, chante au coeur du poète
> L'hymne mélodieux de la sainte beauté.—

and Swinburne's lines on the pagan arch-prostitute, Dolores,

> (What ailed us, O gods, to desert you
> For creeds that refuse and restrain? . . .
> Cry aloud; for the old world is broken:
> Cry out; for the Phrygian is priest. . . .)

are informed with the same *Sehnsucht*.

[10] "Then we will lead thee to the grottoes bright with amethyst and crystal, where the elements and fair shapes move in an eternal dance. We will dip thee

The poet concludes:

> Ahi, da che tramontò la vostra etate
> Vola il dolor su le terrene culle![11]

Let us look again at the landscape: in the lines quoted above we have seen serene idleness of noonday fields, silent glow of sea and sky, sunlit hills; now we see grottoes bright with amethyst and crystal, where the elements and fair shapes move in an eternal dance, rivers melodious with swans, on whose waters the limbs of the nymphs glisten silver-like; from the same poem we may quote similar visions of enchantment, such as a fair island kissed by the fragrant kisses of the waves, Dorian forums into which Bacchantes break with lyres and flowers, a solitary valley crowned with tall pine-woods, a lonely promontory facing the Sicilian sea, towards which white lambs flock. . . . It is, in a word, the romantic Greece, or rather Hellas, of the Parnassians, fixed once for all in the prose and verse of Théophile Gautier, Louis Ménard, Leconte de Lisle.[12]

The picture of the serene Hellenic world recurs in Carducci's *Fantasia* (1875), which is to be studied side by side with Baudelaire's *Parfum exotique*, the poem with a significantly romantic title, which has inspired it:[13]

> Tu parli; e, de la voce a la molle aura
> lenta cedendo, si abbandona l'anima
> del tuo parlar su l'onde carezzevoli,
> e a strane plaghe naviga.

---

into the streams where the music of the swans summons the choirs of the Naiads: on the waters their limbs glisten silvery like the moon."

[11] "Alas, since your age has set, sorrow hovers on the earthly cradles."

[12] See for all *Rèveries d'un paien mistique*: *Euforion*, *La Grèce*; *Hellas*, by Ménard, on whose Hellenism *l'esthétique parnassienne repose*, according to Maurice Barrès.

[13] The relation between Carducci and Baudelaire has been dealt with by Professor P. P. Trompeo in two lectures, delivered in April, 1935, before the Arcadia, in Rome.

Naviga in un tepor di sole occiduo
ridente a le cerulee solitudini. . . .[14]

The start is the same as in Baudelaire's sonnet: a sensuous stimulus (more so in Baudelaire, being a perfume) coming from the beloved, carries the poet away to a dream-landscape:

Quand, les deux yeux fermés, en un soir chaud d'automne,
Je respire l'odeur de ton sein chaleureux,
Je vois se dérouler les rivages heureux
Qu'éblouissent les feux d'un soleil monotone. . . .

In the poem which immediately follows in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, *La Chevelure*, the poet, dealing with the same theme of exotic vision, says:

Comme d'autres esprits voguent sur la musique,
Le mien, ô mon amour! nage sur ton parfum.

Carducci classifies himself among the spirits of the first kind, those who float on a stream of music; this more intellectual stimulus does not conjure up, as in Baudelaire, *la langoureuse Asie et la brûlante Afrique*, nor

Une île paresseuse où la nature donne
Des arbres singuliers et des fruits savoureux,

but the isles of Greece, the Hellas of Goethe, Schiller, Ménard, Leconte de Lisle: a soothing vision which allows the soul to forget the present in recollections of the ancient days—in fact, the first title of *Fantasia* was *Rimembranze antiche:* ancient memories. Baudelaire seeks for a deeper languor in his surrender to the flesh; Carducci, a romantic but not a decadent, knows of no such surrender; he, too, seeks oblivion, but the conventional picture of Greece suffices for his exotic aspiration:

[14] "Thou speakest; my soul, softly yielding to the languid cadence of thy voice, abandons itself on the caressing waves of thy speech, and sails to strange shores. It sails in a warmth of setting sun, smiling at the azure solitudes."

tra cielo e mar candidi augelli volano,
isole verdi passano,

e i templi su le cime ardui lampeggiano
di candor pario ne l'occaso roseo,
ed i cipressi de la riva fremono,
e i mirti densi odorano.[15]

White birds, white temples gleaming from the summits: unavoidable elements of such landscape, *cignes blancs*, *acropoles blanches* of Ménard and his school.

Baudelaire goes on:

Guidé par ton odeur vers de charmants climats,
Je vois un port rempli de voiles et de mâts
Encor tout fatigués par la vague marine,

Pendant que le parfum des verts tamariniers,
Qui circule dans l'air et m'enfle la narine,
Se mêle dans mon âme au chant des mariniers.

And Carducci:

Erra lungi l'odor su le salse aure
e si mesce al cantar lento de' nauti,
mentre una nave in vista al porto ammaina
le rosse vele placida.[16]

Guidé par ton odeur, Baudelaire had said, who derives the whole picture from the perfume of the beloved. But, in imitating this link in *Erra lungi l'odor*, Carducci has had to resort to a makeshift: in his poem, the scent is that of the myrtles which the poet imagines he sees. The passage reads like an interpolation, and Carducci's verse, at this point, falls much below Baudelaire's unity

[15] "White birds fly between the sky and the sea; green islands drift, and the temples, high on the summits, gleam with Parian sheen in the rosy sunset, and the cypresses on the shore quiver, and the thick myrtles send forth their perfume."

[16] "The perfume is scattered abroad on the salty breezes, and mingles with the slow singing of the mariners, while a ship in sight of the harbour peacefully lowers its red sails."

of inspiration. If the perfume of the fair bosom naturally evoked for Baudelaire

des femmes dont l'oeil par sa franchise étonne,

where the languorous appeal of the perfume takes shape, Carducci, after having confined to a parenthesis the theme of the perfume he has utilized so awkwardly, adds, too, a vision of women, but his vision is one of the commonplaces of the conventionalized Hellas:

Veggo fanciulle scender da l'acropoli
in ordin lungo; ed han bei pepli candidi,
serti hanno al capo, e in man rami di lauro,
tendon le braccia e cantano.[17]

Nor happier proves the amplification of the Baudelairian line:

Des hommes dont le corps est mince et vigoureux

in this conventional figure of a Greek warrior:

Piantata l'asta in su l'arena patria,
a terra salta un uom ne l'armi splendido:
è forse Alceo da le battaglie reduce
a le vergini lesbie?[18]

The new element Baudelaire has introduced into Carducci's vision of a classical world of serenity and oblivion beyond reach, is woman as a medium, an intercessor. In *Primavera Dorica*, as we have seen, the poet led the way himself: "Ti rapirò nel verso . . . io per te sveglierò da i colli aprichi. . . ." The poet's verse is the "open Sesame" of the dream-world, according to Schiller's recipe ("nur in dem Feenland der Lieder . . ."), which

[17] "I see maidens descending from the acropolis in a long file; they wear the comely white peplos, garlands on their heads, and laurel branches in their hands; they stretch out their arms and sing."

[18] "Having fixed his spear on his native land, a man shining in armour leaps ashore: is he perchance Alceus coming back from the battlefield to the Lesbian virgins?"

ultimately goes back to Horace.[19] Baudelaire teaches Carducci a more sensuous and Natural manner of evocation (I write Natural with a capital N with reference to the worship of the romantics for Nature): a charm which emanates from the beloved carries the poet away to the land of his heart's desire. Woman, a dispenser of oblivion, imparts also that supreme form of forgetfulness which is the exotic ecstasy. Woman is for the poet the priestess of the divine Hellenic mysteries. Again, a comparison with Foscolo proves illuminating. In the *Ode all'amica risanata* we read:

E quella, a cui di sacro
Mirto te veggo cingere
Devota il simulacro
Che presiede marmoreo
Agli arcani tuoi lari,
Ove a me sol sacerdotessa appari,
Regina fu: Citera
E Cipro, ove perpetua
Odora primavera,
Regnò beata. . . .[20]

In these lines the beloved is Venus' priestess, intercedes for the poet at the shrine of the goddess with a rite which is felt as an ancient one, in the same way as the marble image of Venus is the reincarnation of a Greek masterpiece due to Canova or another classical sculptor.

[19]Odes to Lollius (IV, ix) and to Melpomene (III, xxx); the theme of immortality secured by verse was taken over by the poets of the Pléiade and by Shakespeare, Schiller, Gautier

(Les dieux eux-mêmes meurent,
Mais les vers souverains
demeurent
Plus forts que les airains),

Carducci ("Muor Giove, l'inno del poeta resta").

[20]"And she, whose image I see thee garlanding with sacred myrtle, the marble image which holds sway over thy innermost home, where thou appearest priestess to me alone, she was a queen: she ruled in her blessedness over Cythera and Cyprus, where is the scent of a perpetual spring."

All these things were concrete and actual; they were not mere phantoms of the mind. Compare with this attitude that of Carducci, so pierced with *Sehnsucht:*

> Tu parli; e de la voce a la molle aura
> lenta cedendo, si abbandona l'anima
> del tuo parlar su l'onde carezzevoli,
> e a strane plaghe naviga.

Here the voice of the beloved acts as a spell; elsewhere, the spell is wrought by her eyes. Thus in a short occasional poem to Delia,[21] "O Delia, dei laghi lombardi . . .," and in the better known ode *Su l'Adda*:

> . . . perdermi lungi da gli uomini
> amo or di Lidia nel guardo languido,
> ove nuotano ignoti
> desiderii e misterii.[22]

Exotic desires, to be sure, elusive dreams, "the vain longing after ancient beauty." And romantic mysteries, like the one recorded in the *Vendette della luna*, a poem admittedly modelled on one of Baudelaire's *Petits poèmes en prose*, *Les Bienfaits de la lune*; where the poet drinks "a strange, unspeakable sweetness" from the eyes of the beloved,

> Com'uom che va sotto la luna estiva. . . .
> Ed ei sente un desio d'ignoti amori
> Una lenta dolcezza al cuor gravare,
> E perdersi vorria tra i muti albori
> E dileguare.[23]

[21]Delia was the Greek name of a Junoesque actress, Adele May, who in the circle of the *Cronaca Bizantina* in Rome played a part not unlike that of Madame Sabatier, Gautier's Apollonie, in the Parnassian *milieux* in Paris.

[22]"Now I love to lose myself, far from mankind, in Lydia's languid eyes, where unknown desires and mysteries float."

[23]"Like a man who wanders beneath the summer moon . . . and feels a desire of unknown loves weigh on his heart with a lazy sweetness, and would wish to lose himself in the mute glimmer and fade away."

If the classical allusions of *Fantasia* could still cloak the romantic character of Carducci's inspiration, no one is likely to be mistaken about it in seeing the precise, conventional, Hellenic landscape make place for "unknown desires and mysteries," "a desire for unknown loves," or that for an "unknown strange shore" (*il desio d'un ignoto estraneo lito*) of the sonnet *Mattutino e notturno*. For the "desire for an unknown strange shore" is nothing less than the *ulterius ripae amor*, the exotic nostalgia which forms the very essence of romanticism. And if this is not the "formlessness, sentimentality and morbidity of romanticism," from which Professor Momigliano, in the article quoted above, proclaimed Carducci exempt, one wonders what he means by them. Moreover, is Momigliano right in saying that "there is never in Carducci the theme of ruins and silence as a note of melancholy and neglect"? Let us take the central theme of the ode *Alle Fonti del Clitunno*, apropos of which Momigliano writes: "The sylvan, idyllic, moonlit silences of Clitumnus are filled with a war-cry which is repeated from mountain to mountain, and with a rout of warriors and horses." One might point out to Momigliano that the war-cry precedes, and that "Tutto ora tace" ("All is silence now") follows, and introduces the funeral elegy of the departed nymphs, driven away by the red-haired Galilean, according to the formula of romantic Neo-Hellenism (Schiller, Ménard). True, that "Tutto ora tace" is not to be interpreted in too romantic a light. To De Lollis[24] it recalled Byron's "Far other scene is Trasimene now;" however, certain lines of Propertius,[25]

[24] *Appunti sulla lingua poetica del Carducci*, p. 131.

[25] Propertius' lines are to be read in the light of *Elegies*, IV, i: "Hoc quodcumque vides, hospes . . .," and IV, iv: "Quid tum Roma fuit . . .," where the situation is reversed.

which can hardly be defined pre-romantic, are just as apposite:

> heu Vei veteres! et vos tum regna fuistis,
> et vestro posita est aurea sella foro:
> nunc intra muros pastoris bucina lenti
> cantat, et in vestris ossibus arva metunt.

While undoubtedly Carducci in the last part of his ode swings over to the genuinely classical, Horatian, manner, with his apostrophe to the "Itala madre," there is little doubt that the central part of the poem, with its complaint "Visser le ninfe, vissero," is typical of Neo-Hellenism, Second Empire. Indeed, it is curious to see how the poet, who misses on the banks of Clitumnus classical ilexes and cypresses, and deprecates the weeping willow, seems not to be aware that he himself is planting on those banks, through his elegy, the most melancholy weeping willow that a Böcklin might have imagined. Now, already Leopardi's canzone *Alla Primavera o Delle Favole antiche* was an elegy for the departed nymphs,

> Vivi, tu, vivi, o santa
> Natura? . . .
> Già di candide Ninfe i rivi albergo. . . ;[26]

a canzone whose theme, that

> . . . la sciagura e l'atra
> Face del ver consunse
> Innanzi tempo

(sorrow and the gloomy torch of Truth destroyed too soon) the glorious age of the joyous fables of old, Carducci had taken up in a mediocre juvenile poem to Phoebus Apollo:[27]

[26] "Dost thou live, dost thou live, O holy nature? . . . The streams, once the dwelling-place of white nymphs. . . ."

[27] Edizione Nazionale, I, p. 79.

Il vero inesorabile
Di fredda ombra coprio
Te larva d'almi secoli
Nume de' greci e mio.[28]

Carducci went on:

E pèra il grave secolo
Che vita mi spegnea,
Che agghiaccia il canto ellenico
Nell' anima febèa.[29]

Such lines, insignificant as poetry, are nevertheless significant in so far as they help us to understand why Carducci, when he discovered the foreign Neo-Hellenism, mistook it for genuine classicism. The *grave secolo* was the time in which young Carducci lived, *i.e.*, the Italian romantic period which bore the imprint of Manzoni's Christianity. The naïve, false idea Carducci formed in those juvenile years of the character of romanticism, was responsible for the misunderstanding which brought about, in his mature poetry, the odd contamination of genuine classicism by pseudo-classicism, *i.e.*, romantic exoticism. To Carducci the Neo-Guelph movement (Gioberti in politics, Manzoni in literature) appeared in those years almost as the philosophical background of the feeble mediaeval and sentimental strain of Giovanni Prati and the other provincial disciples of foreign romanticism who then held the field. Here is the definition of the romantic school Carducci gave in the essay *Di alcune condizioni della presente letteratura in Italia* (1867):

Faith is the principle and foundation of this school: *i.e.*, in philosophy proper it returns to the Holy Fathers, in political philosophy to the Holy Fathers as well, in particular to the ideas

[28] "Inexorable Truth cast a cold shadow over thee, a phantom from glorious centuries, deity of the Greeks and mine."

[29] "May the stern century perish, which stifled my life and freezes the Hellenic song in the Phoebean soul."

of Saint Augustine and Bossuet; in poetry it returned to the Middle Ages and meant to draw from reality, but soon went astray from reality, soon degenerated into mysticism and sentimentality, which are distortions of intellect and feeling that go well together.

When Carducci wrote these words, he had just begun to make a direct acquaintance of the great foreign romantic writers. Of these masters whom Carducci took as models, forgetting his juvenile plea for an out-and-out native (*paesana*) art, Victor Hugo and Heinrich Heine came first. But what Carducci saw in them were not the more deeply romantic aspects, but rather a rhetoric of contrasts and antitheses, of strained and violent images, which are no more romantic than baroque: such flashes of style as: "Laissez passer Caïn! il appartient à Dieu!", "Non, Liberté! non, peuple! Il ne faut pas qu'il meure,"

> Ich trage im Herzen viel Schlangen
> Und dich, Geliebte mein.

No, Carducci's romanticism did not begin with the polemic and ironical verse written in imitation of Barbier, Hugo, Heine: his actual romanticism began when his soul found itself in the condition of receiving that form of the *mal du siècle* whose formula is, as we have seen: "La beauté sereine et tranquille de l'art grec paraissait exprimer merveilleusement les nouveaux besoins d'apaisement."

Carducci found himself in this state of mind after 1870, when that kind of craven politics which had succeeded to the fertile passions of the Risorgimento, prompted him to seek refuge from nauseating reality in a world of pure contemplation. The Neo-Hellenic exoticism of the Parnassians seemed designed to satisfy the *besoin d'apaisement* of the ancient worshipper of the

classics, Carducci. Just at the time of the *Primavere elleniche*, which are the first fruits of Carducci's exotic dream, the poet wrote to a friend: "From time to time one must grant me these returns to the serene, almost idolatrous contemplation of the aesthetic forms of naturally divine Greece: from time to time I must be allowed to seek some rest in this labour of craftsmanship, to take my mind off reality, which otherwise would stifle me with indignation and disgust." *La Grecia naturalmente divina*: the Parnassian opium den where Carducci sought oblivion, down to the Baudelairian *cupio dissolvi* in the woman-landscape of dreamland. The romantic Hugo and Heine had supplied Carducci only with a store of baroque metaphors and epigrammatic conceits; but this Carducci still had a firm grip upon reality, upon the present, kept upon it a steadfast gaze in order to warn and inveigh. It was the "classical" craftsmen, the polished Gautier and Platen, who transformed Carducci into a thorough romantic; while hammering his verse, he might well have imagined he was imitating his ancient master Horace; actually his face was turned away from reality, the Parnassian syren murmured:

> L'ora presente è in vano, non fa che percuotere e fugge;
> sol nel passato è il bello, sol ne la morte è il vero.[30]

The Carducci of these lines, contrary to what Momigliano imagines in his article on *Sanità di Carducci*, might have sung Ravenna, the city made beautiful by death; this Carducci is not he who, in Marpicati's words, "made no concessions to any kind of exoticism:" it is not to this Carducci, who couched in classical rhythms a romantic inspiration, in the footsteps of Platen,[31] that the Italians

[30] "The present hour is in vain, it does nothing but strike and fly away; Beauty is only in the past, Truth is in death only" (*Presso l'urna di Percy Bysshe Shelley*).

[31] The relation of Carducci to Platen has been studied by various critics

of to-day pay their tribute. They live in the present; they see Truth and Beauty only in the present life of the dynamic Italy of Mussolini. Their Carducci is the poet of *Nell'Annuale della fondazione di Roma*, that *carmen saeculare* of Rome, the eternal and ever new.

(M. Azzolini, *G. Carducci und die deutsche Litteratur*, Tübingen, 1910; F. Sternberg, *La poesia neo-classica tedesca e le Odi barbare di G. Carducci*, Trieste, 1910; F. Hunziker, *Carducci und Deutschland*, Aarau, 1927). But these critics seem to have overlooked the derivation of the ode *Per la morte di Napoleone Eugenio* (which offers an excellent instance of romantic inspiration) from Platen's *Die Wiege des Königs von Rom*. In both poems is the same nostalgic vision of a heroic past beyond recall, the same fearful sense of mysterious forebodings:

> Aber ach! Kein Wiegengesang der Liebe,
> Waffenlärm schlug hart an das Ohr des Säuglings:
> Eine Welt, schon lagert sie sich um seine
> Tragische Kindheit.

Compare with:

> Vittoria e pace da Sebastopoli
> sopian co'l rombo de l'ali candide
> il piccolo: Europa ammirava. . . .
> Ma di dicembre, ma di brumaio
> cruento è il fango, *etc.*

There is a clear parallelism between the figures of Platen's Maria Louisa and Carducci's Laetitia; both figures strike the same romantic note: *Weh, alles umsonst! . . . Alles so tief liegt!* The conclusion of Carducci's ode, as a critic (Azzolini, p. 35) has noticed, seems to echo the conclusion of Schiller's *Der Taucher*:

> Es kommen, es kommen die Wasser all,
> Sie rauschen herauf, sie rauschen nieder—
> Den Jüngling bringt keines wieder.

The connection between Platen's ode on the young son of Napoleon who lost his crown, and Schiller's ballad on the youth who dives into the depths in order to recover the cup which the king has thrown there, may have been brought about by a fanciful analogy between the two destinies, as well as by such verbal similarities as that between Platen's last phrase: "Alles so tief liegt!" and the opening of Schiller's ballad:

> Wer wagt es . . .
> Zu tauchen in diesen Schlund? . . .
> Wer ist der Beherzte, ich frage wieder,
> Zu tauchen in diese Tiefe nieder?

THE THEATRE AND THE SOCIAL CONFUSION

MALCOLM MACKENZIE ROSS

IN the contemporary theatre there is apparent a vigorous effort to break away from the social-realistic tradition. The prose play with its photographic stage has become too limited and often too intellectual in its appeal, and playwrights and critics alike are searching for a new medium and a new vision, a medium which will take fire in the theatre, and a vision which has the fire to bestow. The traditional poetic method is still mentioned as a possible solution for the problem. More radical thinkers in the theatre, however, are convinced that modern life offers new mediums for expression much more suitable to the dramatic purpose than spoken verse. For them the problem is to find the equivalent of the Elizabethan method, and they go to jazz and athletics and the motion-picture for idioms to which the modern is most susceptible.

But we should not leap to the conclusion that, if by some magic formula of expression the plays of Eugene O'Neill could be made intelligible to Maggie and Jiggs and Mrs. Grundy, our problem would be solved. We should still have to account for the dramatic ideas of Eugene O'Neill. In the theatre, at least, we cannot overlook content for form. The escape from the pervasive social consciousness and sick individualism of modern drama, if there is to be an escape, cannot be a purely aesthetic one. The history of the modern theatre is a symptomatic part of the history of modern culture, and the problems of the theatre are, in part at least, the problems of that culture. For instance, we can see reflected in drama the loss of an imaginative faith in kingship with the rise of the middle class and the con-

sequent shift from an individual to a social point of view. And to-day, with the class-question at the bursting point, the dramatist cannot stand aside from his world and work out his single destiny with masks and lights and muted trumpets. In this article I propose to study the relation of the social and cultural question to the problem confronting the contemporary dramatist.

Class became actively self-conscious in the English theatre with the emergence of bourgeois prose-drama in the eighteenth century. I say actively self-conscious because here you have a clearly defined protest against the standards and accomplishments of a rival class. Class-distinctions, of course, are implicit, even obvious, in Greek and Elizabethan drama. One recalls the "sweaty night-caps" of the mob in *Julius Caesar* and indeed the whole tradition of kingly heroes. But the tradition was accepted. The unpleasant condition of the night-caps belonged to the eternal order of the universe, in company with rocks and stones and trees, and also, I suppose, with "the convention of the calumniator believed."

The bourgeois drama was revolutionary. It attacked a way of life, an entire social perspective. The middle class began to feel itself more powerful and more important than the court, and it was thoroughly tired of being the butt of the courtly jest. It was also industriously sanctimonious, and had no sympathy at all with the devilishly attractive amusements of its betters. The cynical immorality of Restoration comedy seemed dangerously irresponsible to the good roast-beef of England, and it is not surprising that the first battle-cry of the new drama was "Virtue," the astonishing virtue of the bourgeoisie.

There was soon a profound change in the nature of the

tragic conception. With a blameless hero the tragic emphasis is bound to be on circumstance. The plays of Lillo, Charles Johnson, and the others, are populated with innocent souls who fall victim to evil companions, though never to evil desires. "Have a good cry over the fate of this blameless, unlucky man," is the typical invitation of the sentimental drama. There is no sternness left because there is no balance between character and destiny, between internal motivation and external compulsion. Fate is largely replaced by chance, and character is replaced by personified virtue. The middle class was carrying a chip on its shoulder. It denied, for practical purposes at least, any participation in original sin, and if the miseries of the world were to be explained they must be explained in terms of the external. Perhaps the peculiar state of religion had a negative effect on the drama. The age had really no centre of gravity other than the social and economic aspirations of the middle class. The religious theme had gone the way of the "imperial theme"—into the dust-bin.

This was not all done by the sentimental dramatists of the eighteenth century. Their work was merely transitional, and in them the specific criticism of society never actually comes out. For instance, Charles Johnson allows his heroine, Caelia, to be imprisoned in a brothel, but only that we may weep for her.[1] There is no attack on the social evil. But such an attack was inevitably the next step. After the middle-class mind had tired of preening itself on its own virtue, there was nothing else to do but to examine the conditions which made its conception of virtue unreal. Culture had burnt its bridges, and there was nothing left but the assault.

[1]Charles Johnson, *Caelia*, London, 1733.

Professor Allardyce Nicoll has laboriously compiled a list of unplayable plays that appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century.[2] Despite the uncertainty and ineptitude of the writing, these plays show a progressive advance of the social point of view. The problem of the individual in relation to society is the dominant theme and the cosmological aspect is slighted. As one would expect, comedy and tragedy move closer together until they are almost indistinguishable. With man considered as a cog in a social machine, the cathartic value of laughter became more obvious. Perhaps the recognition of the fact that society was in a state of change, and that "society outlasted the individual," made dramatic conclusiveness impossible, and the dramatist was increasingly less able to put the stamp of finality on his play. The "slice-of-life" attitude, so popular to-day, was at least in embryo in nineteenth-century drama. The inclination towards prose rather than verse was strengthened down through the century, as was the dramatic interest in the bourgeois character.

Professor Arthur Du Bois has aptly summarized and analysed the popular types of plays.[3] The burlesque heads the list, and in many ways it is typical of the great changes that had taken place. H. J. Byron, Talfourd, and the others sought to "domesticate the heroes of old tragedy." Tragic seriousness was punned off the stage in works like Talfourd's *Shylock, or the Merchant of Venice Preserved.* The point of the jest was always in bringing the grand emotion down to the ordinary commonplace level. For instance, Jessica swears passionately that Lorenzo's "withered heart" comes from "eating goose-

[2] A. Nicoll, *Early Nineteenth Century Drama*, Cambridge, 1930.

[3] A. E. Du Bois, "Shakespeare and Nineteenth Century Drama" (*Journal of English Literary History*, Sept., 1934); to whose analysis of the whole period I am much indebted.

berries when green." The burlesque *genre* also abounds in topical references and satire, and reaches its height in the work of W. S. Gilbert. Next come the melodramas, which tend in the direction of the social thesis-play. The *Long Strike* of Boucicault is typical with its attack on Manchester strike conditions. In the historical plays of Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning, the same social spirit is at work although it filtered through a decadent medium. Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn finds the spirit of modern tragedy in the cry of Beatrice Cenci on her way to death:

> What a tyrant thou art,
> And what slaves these, and what a world we make
> The oppressor and the opprest. . . .[4]

Tennyson dedicated his trilogy to the "growth of liberty," and Browning depicted Strafford as the victim of a rising spirit of democracy. Other groups of plays which Professor Du Bois divides into domestic, naturalistic, and local-colour plays, all advance the tradition begun in the eighteenth century towards conversational dialogue, sharper observation of commonplace detail, and the social rather than the heroic perspective. As one might expect, the development of the physical stage through the century paralleled the dramatic spirit in its groping towards naturalism.

Obviously the nineteenth century did not stand still. It moved slowly but surely to the "overwhelming question" that we must face to-day. Robertson with his plays about "Caste" and "Society" and his use of real stage-doors, was not the great innovator that he is commonly supposed to be. But he did much to consolidate a tradition and make it stand out as clear as daylight. That his own work was relatively feeble-

[4]Ludwig Lewisohn, *Modern Drama*, New York, 1931.

minded is not the point. He brought into relationship something of the modern social point of view and something of the modern naturalistic method.

Sir Arthur Wing Pinero at times managed to achieve a fusion of medium and idea that demonstrates quite well the possibilities and the limitations of the naturalistic movement. There is a scene in Act III of his masterpiece *The Thunderbolt*, which I must quote. A group of grasping and mutually suspicious relatives are quarrelling over the distribution of an estate.

Ponting, *seated at a table and scribbling away at his calculations*:
A hundred and seventy thousand pounds.
Stephen: Six into seventeen, two and carry five.
Ponting: Six into fifty, eight and carry two.
Stephen: Six into twenty . . .
Ponting: Three—
Stephen: And carry two.
Ponting: Six into twenty again, three and carry two.
Stephen: Again, six into twenty, three and carry two.
Ponting: Six into forty, six and carry four.
Stephen: Six into forty, eight—
Ponting: Eight—
Stephen, *rising, with an air of finality*: Twenty-eight thousand, three hundred and thirty-three pounds, six shillings and eight pence.
Ponting: No! Twenty-eight thousand apiece.
Agitated chorus: No, no, no!

The means used by Pinero are obvious. Here is dialogue whittled down to the bare essentials. There is no comment, no explanation, but there is here, and throughout the play, a supreme contempt for the meanness and littleness of these creatures. The technique of expression is exactly suited to the idea. Indeed, in the passage I have quoted it anticipates the expressionistic method of a play like Elmer Rice's *The Adding Machine*—

communication in the very terms of the thing to be communicated. Rice, to suggest the cog-like insignificance of his characters, gives them numbers instead of names, and makes them behave with the precision and will-lessness of machines. Pinero's characters, groping emptily about in a universe of pounds, shillings, and pence, name their own brief souls with the brief terms of the mint. There is no help asked or needed from poetry. The vision and the medium become one and the same thing—a consummation much to be desired, one would suppose. When we ask ourselves why we are not satisfied after all, it is so easy to reply, "Because it is not poetic;" but that is a silly reply. What we really miss is the positive note. Our drama may have come to a clear and distinct perception of our social and individual predicament, but we are demanding more than this in drama because we are beginning to demand more in life. Because our demand has gone through and beyond the poised, critical, and intellectual thought of Bernard Shaw to the cynical desperation of the moment, we are seeking earnestly for a sustaining vision. It is not enough now to jab at the sore tooth. The tooth must come out. Perhaps we shall have to take the head with it.

Ibsen was the last of the dramatists with anything approaching a positive faith. It is true that no one was a severer critic of society than he. But he, at any rate, had a gospel, a cure for the ill. Professor Stoll speaks of the hollow note that comes at the end of the tragedies of Ibsen and Eugene O'Neill.[5] Again and again the plays of these two men have been bracketed together as typifying the modern tragic effect. And surely this is a mistake. For Ibsen has a profound and aggressive faith in the

[5]E. E. Stoll, "Reconciliation in Tragedy" (UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO QUARTERLY, Oct., 1934).

possibilities of the individual. He stated his creed in these words: "The principal thing is that one remain veracious and faithful in one's relation to oneself. The great thing is not to will one thing rather than another, but to will that which one is absolutely impelled to will because one is oneself and cannot do otherwise. Anything else will drag us into deception." This is the underlying theme of all his important plays. Sometimes he presents it positively in characters like Stockman or Nora. Sometimes it is implied negatively, as in *Ghosts* where we are made to feel that tragedy would have been averted if only Mrs. Alving had been true to herself. There is never a real hollowness in these tragedies. There is often profound despair, to be sure, but one always feels that the *dramatis personae* should have and could have done differently. The effect, dark as it is within the play, is embedded in a challenge, a call for courage and self-assertion and hope. The dramatic action does centre on the relationship of the individual to society and social standards, but we are worlds away from the outlook of the typical social dramatist. True, the religious theme and the imperial theme are as dead for Ibsen as they were for Lillo. But the one last possible faith is realized here—the faith in the individual. As far as the theatre was concerned man pulled himself up by the boot-straps for the last time in the plays of Ibsen and the dramatic cogitations of Bernard Shaw.

When we turn to the work of Eugene O'Neill we cannot help but wonder what has become of the faith of Ibsen. For here at last we are "really in the dark." The tragic spirit of O'Neill is symbolized in the character of Charlie Marsden,[6] dear old Charlie, who "sits beside the

[6]Eugene O'Neill, *Strange Interlude*, Act 1 (*Nine Plays*, New York, 1932, p. 496).

fierce river, immaculately timid, cool and clothed, watching the burning, naked, frozen swimmers drown at last."

Queer, shrinking, neurotic Charlie Marsden outlasts them all, and wins in the end his heart's desire, after it has turned into dust and ashes. There is no "should" about this or about any of O'Neill's plays. The people in them have "loved, lusted, won and lost, sung and wept"—and that is all. The curtain when it falls is black and final. It is not enough to say, as does Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, that the great plays of O'Neill "mean the same thing that *Oedipus* and *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* mean—namely, that human beings are great and terrible creatures when they are in the grip of great passions, and that the spectacle of them is not only absorbing but also and at once horrible and cleansing."[7] Certainly O'Neill aimed bravely at the metaphysical and universal concern of great tragedy. He attempted to thrust aside the critical social movement in dramatic thought and put back on the stage man in his relation to the universe. And how vividly and terribly he has revealed the bankruptcy of that relationship! The *Wasteland* itself is scarcely more terrifying in its realization of the flight of values and significance.

Perhaps it was the insistent complaint of critics that set O'Neill in search of something positive and solid. Perhaps it was an inner need. At any rate in *Lazarus Laughed* he attempted to whip himself into a lyrical cry of acceptance. And now in *Days Without End* he would seal the relation of man to God in the bonds of orthodox religion. At least part of the play's failure can be attributed to the self-consciousness of the attempt. The religious theme seems now to be something of a last resort. In the drama, which must be an emotional thing, it has

[7] Joseph Wood Krutch in Introduction to *Nine Plays by Eugene O'Neill*, p. xx.

not the conviction of the intellectual trend in Christianity of which we have lately heard so much.

The social question, the relation of man to man, cannot be set aside as completely as it is in the work of O'Neill, partly because it was to return to the modern consciousness with tripled force after the "mad twenties" were over, and partly because the bottom seems to have dropped out of the more ambitious theme of man's relation to God. We will pick up the thread of the social drama in a moment. But at this point we cannot leave O'Neill without considering his medium, his manner of expression.

Again I must quote Mr. Krutch. He is writing of *Mourning Becomes Electra*: "To find in the play any lack at all one must compare it with the very greatest works of dramatic literature. . . . But no modern is capable of language really worthy of O'Neill's play, and the lack of that one thing is the penalty we must pay for living in an age which is equal to no more than prose."[8]

"The lack of that one thing"—give us great words and we have great poetic drama! Surely this is a superficial view. "The most soaring eloquence and the most profound poetry," even if they were possible, could not solve the real dilemma of our drama. The poetry would reach the very few who are left with the ear for it, and to them the dramatic thought would be only the more passionate in its unsatisfying despair. But to consider medium by itself for a moment, O'Neill's inability to communicate fully in words is not entirely a personal inability. His expressionistic use of mask and chorus and soliloquy is not solely to cover up literary limitations. It is an attempt to communicate in terms of the theatre to a public as far from the old glory of words as the dramatist himself.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

And we must not assume too easily that we belong to an age which is "equal to no more than prose." The theatrical art of Robert Edmond Jones, Lee Simonson, and Jo Mielziner (to mention only a few names) is much more than prose. The Duke of Saxe-Meneingen, Appia, and Stanislavski have exerted a far-reaching influence on methods of imaginative and appropriate production, until to-day harmony of action, three-dimensional design, and "painting with light" are accepted as fundamental by even the commercial theatre. But this art-theatre movement is not enough. Lee Simonson has made abundantly clear the dependence of his art, stage-design, on the actual work of the playwright.[9] The play is still the thing. Technical miracles can be illuminating and suggestive, but are necessarily subordinate. The designer interprets and does not create. In our day it is possible that the art of the theatre has advanced further than the art of the drama, and that "the stage is set" waiting for the playwright to make significant use of it.

In an article of this length it is impossible to do much more than generalize, and sketch with the thumb-nail. New plays, set to new and interesting designs, are being produced rapidly and should be considered in detail if we are to make any pretension to finality in our judgments. Typical plays like *Merrily We Roll Along*, *The Petrified Forest*, and *Awake and Sing*, have in them the awareness of the cultural and social sick-bed, the dilemma of the individual. *Awake and Sing* differs strikingly from the others named in being a play of revolt, and it profoundly humanizes the radical attitude to the social confusion. Maxwell Anderson's current work *Winterset* is notable

[9]Lee Simonson, *The Stage is Set*, New York, 1932. This is an invaluable study. The chapter on Gordon Craig is an excellent corrective to the common overvaluing of his work.

both for its social sympathy and for its language, which aims at being a poetic version of common speech. Mr. Anderson has experimented with verse before, in his historical plays, and now courageously uses the medium of verse in a play on contemporary slum-life. Whether or not he has indicated a "new path" for dramatic writing to take, remains to be seen. His effort is successful enough, at least, to have revived interest in the possibilities of formal verse.

Yet in many quarters there is a persistent notion that the theatre should not seek a "verse revival," but rather should develop a medium equivalent in popularity and in communicability to the blank-verse medium of the Elizabethans. Perhaps the theatre should forget many of its sanctified conventions and reach outside to the popular interests of the day, if it would discover the elements of a new and more vital means of expression. Recent experimenters have been particularly attracted to the expressive values inherent in the motion-picture, in athletics, and in jazz. They hope that if dramatic ideas could be expressed in terms of idioms imbedded in the popular mind they would have, at last, the world and his wife for audience. A brief consideration of these "idioms" will, I think, clarify the central argument of the article.

The motion-picture is an industry. Yet it is a medium with distinct artistic possibilities. Furthermore, by virtue of its direct impact on the senses, it can communicate immediately and vividly effects which would strain the intelligibility of a modern poet. Whereas Maxwell Anderson must reform modern poetry if he is to reform the stage with it, the motion-picture director can go ahead without self-consciousness, in the knowledge that his medium "gets across" to the ordinary man. A scene

from the silent picture *Tempest* illustrates my point. The camera is stationed at one side of a door leading into an officers' quarters. Directly across from the camera a line of convicted prisoners of war is standing before a firing squad. Two officers stroll up, pass the camera, and open the door, cutting off the view of the condemned men for an instant. The door closes behind them, and the camera looks out suddenly at a heap of corpses. In the casual opening and shutting of a door we are made to realize the fact of death.

This only hints at what the screen might do. Max Reindhart in his recent production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has achieved fantastic miracles with the camera. It is to be hoped that his success will induce cautious capital to welcome the creative artist, and encourage him actually to create in terms of the medium. As Réné Clair, eminent French director, has pointed out, the screen will never become an art until men create directly for it as they would for the stage or the novel. It cannot advance into its own kingdom as long as it remains the mere translator of plays and books. An emancipated motion-picture would not replace the theatre. But it would become a legitimate and significant arm of the theatre, with its proper and different ambitions clearly realized. There would be a division of labour, an extension and enrichment of the means of dramatic expression. If we progress but slowly to this end, it is because we are stumbling over profits. And because of the profit-seeking motive the motion-picture has neither made full use of its own expressive quality, nor reflected with any depth the intellectual and social climate of the time.

Sport and jazz alone rival the "movie" in popular appeal, and it is possible that the dramatist has something

fundamental to learn from Paul Whiteman and Babe Ruth. Perhaps the most significant use of the athletic method that we have seen was in the Douglas Fairbanks film. Aided by camera-trickery and a swash-buckling swagger of his own, Fairbanks cancelled the law of gravity in a most exhilarating fashion, and had no difficulty in communicating his fantasies to an audience which could delight in the grace and imagination of the human body. If nowadays we are all born little golfers and little tennis players rather than little liberals and little conservatives, perhaps words and lights are not enough for us in the theatre. And that the athletic method may be used to express more ambitious matter than Fairbanks was concerned with, we can be sure from the example of the Russians, who have made astounding use of the athletic idiom. By breaking the stage into levels and emphasizing the movement of bodies in a manner that falls somewhere between the ballet and the art of acrobatics, they have given a sheer physical power of expression to the theatre.[10]

Jazz, like the motion-picture, is not a thing in itself but rather a technique, a way of getting an effect. Musically, it depends quite as much on tone-colour and combination of instruments as it does on the underlying rhythm. For this reason it is very difficult to extricate the full effect of jazz and carry it over to another form of expression like the drama. An interesting and quite successful attempt to do this was made in the motion-picture version of *Street Scene*, where the curious pattern of the action was underlined with an appropriate accompaniment of jazz. It is unfortunate but possibly inevitable that dramatists are using the jazz-lyric for their purposes rather than the more essential and more vital elements of the style. This seems much weaker and much

[10]R. Fülöp-Miller and Joseph Gregor, *The Russian Theatre*, London, 1930.

less useful than the muted trumpet and the strange conflicting tempo of the music. However, the significant thing is that the artist is seizing deliberately on the more banal aspects of popular idiom and using them to express his contempt for, and despair of, life as he sees it. T. S. Eliot, in *Sweeney Agonistes*, expresses the sense of futility quite powerfully by the use of this method:

> That's nothing to me and nothing to you
> We gotta do what we gotta do
> We're gonna sit here and drink this booze
> We're gonna sit here and have a tune
> We're gonna stay and we're gonna go
> And somebody's gotta pay the rent.

The refrain—

> Under the bamboo
> Bamboo
> Bamboo
> Under the bamboo tree—

almost succeeds in echoing the tom-tom music of Cab Calloway.

W. H. Auden, in the *Dance of Death*, emphasizes his thesis that we "belong to a world which has had its day," by borrowing tricks from jazz, athletics, the circus, the musical revue, and almost every other form of popular amusement. These are brought together in producing a powerfully negative effect. The opening scene is on a beach. Very handsome specimens of both sexes are sunbathing and exercising with a medicine-ball. They sing a long chorus in praise of the sun, from which I will quote a typical passage:

> Lie down on the sand
> Feel the sun on your flesh
> It's so grand
> Oh boy you'll soon want to get fresh!

Living with nature is the life of the future
The new life
The true life
The life for you
Europe's in a hole
Millions on the dole
But come out into the sun.

While the chorus is expressing its empty optimism in empty language, someone has made off with all the clothes leaving military uniforms instead. The sun-god departs and the bathers are left stiff and mechanical from cold. This is Auden's tone throughout. He seizes on something which seems vital in itself and throws it into relation with the large futility of things. His characters are not individuals but A, B, C, and alpha, beta, and gamma, all helpless and insignificant in relation both to society and the universe.

There is superb mockery of its kind in his circus-parody of an attempt to know the final metaphysical truth. A dancer advances to the front of the stage, preparing for the great moment. The announcer speaks: "Hullo, everybody! As you all know, the greatest feat, the most stupendous risk in human history is being undertaken this evening by a gentleman who prefers to remain known simply as the Pilot. His ambition is no less than to reach the very heart of reality." The crowd cheers wildly and begins laying lavish bets on the outcome. The announcer continues: "The Pilot desires me to thank all those who have been kind enough to send him messages of good luck, knitted scarves, crystalized fruits, killing-bottles, copies of the *Outline of Modern Knowledge for Boys and Girls*, pamphlets relating to the pyramids, birth-control, a universal language, *etc.* He regrets that owing to pressure he is unable to answer each correspondent

individually, but trusts that they will accept this public acknowledgement." The search for reality proceeds in the form of a frenzied acrobatic dance, which ends in the collapse of the dancer. Here is Auden's contempt for a lost world, a world which would have Christ walk the waves for a newsreel camera should he come again. And here we are face to face with the real disease of our theatre.

I have traced briefly the development of the social concern in drama. This growing social consciousness has run parallel to a decline in faith—faith in the individual, faith in the security of the individual's relation to the universe. To-day we have all about us idioms for profound dramatic use. The fault is not in the medium that we have no theatrical expression at once popular and great. We have not to resort to a lost verse-style in order to communicate our vision. The fault is in the vision. It hurts too much. Our tragedy has become truly a "comedy of the grotesque," full of painful, bitter laughter. And it has no more finality than a question-mark.

Sean O'Casey ends his *Within the Gates* by letting a prostitute crazed with the fear of death snatch at a religious consolation, while off stage can be heard the dull hopeless "chant of the down-and-outs." There is terror and pity here, but no relief. We do not desire a gush of optimism in our drama. No great drama has had that. Tragedy will always look steadfastly into the pit—but the pit must have a bottom. We cannot go on forever showing to the world that the world has ceased to exist.

The crowd does not take the theatre seriously now, because of the very quality of the seriousness. It prefers the crooning of Rudy Vallee to work in the direction of Mr. Auden's, and who can doubt that this is a sensible preference? I have said that Auden, in his use of the

popular idiom, seizes on something that seems vital in itself and throws it into relation with the large futility of things. In doing this he casts the shadow not only on the shape of life, but on the very detail of it. He despises the symbolism which he drags from the popular world to express his sense of life's futility as a whole. Both the means and the end of his tragic expression are of the one colour. If all the swords and jewels and roses of Shakespeare's dramatic poetry were tarnished and rotten, how much of the effect would be lost! But Shakespeare could feel the positive value of these things. There was a unity of regard between artist and audience for the popular aspirations of the day. This is the unity we have lost. We are divided into those who guess gloomily at the destiny of the wood, and those who prefer to regard the living quality of the individual trees.

That there is life in these, in jazz, in athletics, even in the symbol of the machine (that bogey of Western expressionistic drama) we know from the positive use that has been made of them in Russia. There the dramatist and his audience have a community of sympathy for the significant details of their life. The machine, for instance, becomes a symbol of power and triumph. It is not safe to be too enthusiastic about the Russian theatre. Propaganda is still the dominant theme, and profounder dramatic ideas are yet to come. But it has made the great beginning. The social question-mark is erased, and there is the right positive relation between the popular life and the idioms of its expression.

Surely it is obvious that our dramatists cannot set out deliberately to imitate this condition. The theatre, whatever else it may be, is always a symptom. The cure for it now cannot be a self-cure. Its sick individualism, its religious emptiness, and its mounting social despair

come from outside, and from outside, too, must come the physic. How, it is not our function to speculate. For although the theatre takes its nourishment from life, it can never predict the substance of its very next meal.

JAMES WILSON MORRICE

DONALD W. BUCHANAN

A NOMAD Canadian the French called him, and such James Wilson Morrice was. A wanderer to the point of eccentricity, he lived for many years in a studio on the Quai des Grands Augustins, opposite the Ile de la Cité, in Paris, where a hallway filled with boxes and trunks testified that the owner was forever ready to depart at a moment's notice for Canada, Venice, North Africa, or the West Indies.

His voyages remain recorded for us in, I suppose, at least five hundred tiny panels and about two hundred canvases, scattered in collections, public and private, over two continents. In these paintings, we find the gentle and, at times, the vaguely melancholy reaction of a vision, magnificently sensitive and subtle, to the world about the artist. A horse and sleigh crossing the St. Lawrence, dark shawled Italian women in the Public Gardens at Venice, an Arab with a donkey on the beach at Tangiers, a group of French artisans on a Sunday outing along the banks of the Seine: such are the subjects. Diverse enough they are, and yet alike. Over each hangs an atmosphere, to describe a visual sensation all too inadequately in words, of dreamlike and languid meditation.

"On a toujours l'impression qu'il peint le dimanche après-midi," wrote the French critics, Marius and Ary Leblond, in that charming essay which they devoted to the Canadian painter in their book, *Peintres de Races*. It is only on Sunday afternoons, they argue, that an agreeable ease settles over the passers-by; that, on beaches and in parks, crowds arrange themselves in nonchalant, graceful groups; only on such days that the amiable, easy com-

positions of Watteau are recaptured in twentieth-century settings. "Hence a great poetry that holds one," they add, "a poetry which seems to us determined not only by his personal life, nationally uprooted, but also by his fundamentally American soul."[1]

We know certainly that the overwhelming absorption which Morrice possessed in the sensibilities of vision, added to an amazing independence of motive in the habits of his daily life, severed him early from the conventional and provincial society into which he had been born in Montreal. His parents were rich and Presbyterian; his father, David Morrice, was one of the most philanthropic laymen the church could lay claim to in Canada. Educated at the University of Toronto, and for the law at Osgoode Hall, Morrice first took up sketching in water-colours as a hobby. Then at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six—he was born on August 10, 1865—he decided to devote his talents entirely to painting. With the assistance of Sir William Van Horne, whose prestige as a connoisseur of the fine arts was already high in Montreal, he persuaded his father to finance a sojourn in Paris. Once settled in that city he made it his home for the rest of his life, although he frequently visited Canada.

In Paris his individuality and his talents developed rapidly. One of his first friendships, as a student at Julien's, was with Maurice Prendergast, the struggling young artist from New England, who, before his death in 1924, developed a genius, the most purely lyrical, the most joyous, in American art. Morrice was also much with Charles Conder, the English artist, who had lived in Australia and who was earning distinction in those days as a

[1] "D'où une grande et retenante poésie—poésie qui nous apparaît bien déterminée non seulement par sa vie personnelle de déraciné sans nationalité, mais aussi par son âme de race américaine."

painter of fans and of pale, blonde landscapes. But Montreal frowned on the young painter, who had now settled into care-free habits. The emancipated Bohemianism, cultivated in the decade that produced the *Yellow Book* in England, had no equivalent in the Canada of forty years ago. Morrice, in return, made wry grimaces at his native city. Yet, if he hated certain aspects of life in Montreal, he loved greatly the rural charm of the old French parishes of the Province of Quebec. As a painter, it was the Ile d'Orléans and Ste. Anne de Beaupré, or the view of Quebec from Lévis, that attracted him (see Plate II). With William Brymner and Maurice Cullen, his two closest friends among Canadian artists, he went on many sketching trips along the lower St. Lawrence.

Never in the presence of these Canadian scenes is the capacity for wonder and for whimsical amusement lost. Always there is the naïve delight of the child in sleighs and in snow-covered roads. The steep curved streets of Quebec City figure largely in his Canadian compositions, these and winter lanes near Ste. Anne de Beaupré.

"I remember as a student in Paris," writes A. Y. Jackson, the artist, "going to the Salon d'Automne and seeing a little group of paintings on a wall, and the vivid impression of its being Canada before I realized who they were by. . . . There is sympathy and understanding in his Canadian work. To all the young artists in Montreal when I was a student, Morrice was an inspiration. He and Cullen broke up the Dutch domination as far as the artists were concerned." "As you say," assents Morrice (in a letter, dated December 23, 1910, and addressed to Newton MacTavish, then editor of the *Canadian Magazine*), "these English dealers with their ghostly Dutch monochromes, have poisoned everything. Healthy, lusty colour which you see in Canada is no doubt considered

vulgar. Cullen, I see from the Montreal papers, has painted a good picture of St. John's, Newfoundland. He is the man in Canada who gets at the guts of things." The fleeting aspects of atmosphere, rays of light on foliage and grass, on mortar and on flesh, were being recorded objectively, scientifically almost, by the French Impressionists. Their methods brought colour, pagan colour, into modern painting, and eventually, through J. W. Morrice and Maurice Cullen, into Canadian art also.

Yet one must hasten to explain that whatever he may have been, Morrice was never at any time a servile imitator of the great Impressionists. He was never one who sought, like Henri-Martin or Maufra, to shine in a reflected blaze of violets and oranges. From the restrained sober approach which Harpignies, the artist whom he chose to call his first master, had to landscape, Morrice passed through a slightly precious phase of Whistlerian composition to take afterwards an interest, almost in the manner of Courbet, in *la matière*, in the surface-texture of paint. Then, about 1905 he decided, as he told one of his friends, that in future he would no longer paint heavily but would cover his canvases as lightly as possible. Dappled strokes he placed separately on the canvas and then rubbed them together with a cloth. Indirectly this was Impressionism, but in a highly personal form. In the last chapter of his volume, *Landmarks in Nineteenth Century Painting*, Clive Bell, the English critic, mentions a second crop of Impressionists: "But this second crop consisted of contemporaries who followed tardily the lead of the founders or of men only by a little their juniors—pupils rather than descendants. Lebourg, Le Sidanier, J. W. Morrice, Conder, Sickert and Steer may be considered as of this second brood: you note the prevalence of English names." In their small compositions in oils, their sket-

ches on panels, the affinity between Morrice and Sickert is obvious. The Frenchmen, Bonnard and Vuillard, leaders of a school which bears the inadequate label *Intimist*, are still closer to Morrice. Louis Vauxcelles, the French critic, is willing to link Bonnard, Vuillard, Sickert, and Morrice, as men who developed a similar style under similar influences. "Their design is free and rapid," says T. W. Earp (in *The Modern Movement in Painting*) of Bonnard and Vuillard. "Their composition has an air of easy fortuity . . . enhanced by the gem-like irradiation of their colour." For the mature Morrice, the artist who about 1907 painted the "Race Course at St. Malo," now owned by the Montreal Art Association (see Plate I), this description fits without the alteration of a word. In this picture he becomes the Anglo-Saxon counterpart of Bonnard. Anglo-Saxon, one writes, for there is a sense of humour, a secondary association of whimsy in many of his compositions that is not French. "He said he liked to put a little humour into his paintings," states Gabriel Thompson, the Welsh artist, who was one of his friends. "He pointed out to me the two red-trousered soldiers placed jauntily in the middle of the race-course picture, and he said he had put them here to make people smile."

But it is supremely difficult to classify the man, for no sooner have we him neatly labelled, than we find that he was still, at the age of forty-three, content and eager to be a student, unprepared to stand still and, now at this moment in his life, ready to be deeply influenced by Henri Matisse. This French painter had thrown over—among other things—"the mechanism of perspective in order to give free rein to his decorative combinations of coloured planes." The older generation of painters, who had understood the Impressionists and even the Post-Impres-

sionists, were startled and bewildered. Not so Morrice. He told Clive Bell in 1908, as the two men stood before a group of these pictures, that, contrary to popular opinion, Matisse did not need to be put into a padded cell: he was good, very good. The date is significant. From then on, for several years, the Canadian was to attempt to master complicated patterns and logical simplifications. But his gifts were for more purely lyrical expression. His canvas, "House in Santiago, Cuba," which the late Lord Henry Bentinck presented through the Contemporary Art Society to the Tate Gallery, demonstrates how much he fumbled in those attempts. The pattern is flat and obvious. Other paintings, such as the Tangiers series, shown at the Salon d'Automne in 1912, and of these especially "The Beach, Tangiers," now in the Provincial Museum, in Quebec, indicate, on the other hand, how relatively successful Morrice could still be when he tried less arbitrarily and more slowly to apply new ideas and when he still remembered—for he could never entirely forget—his ability to invoke atmosphere and recession by subtle variations in value.

For two winters in succession, 1911 and 1912, he visited Tangiers (see Plate III) in order to be there with Matisse, but although the two men became friends, there was always something paradoxical in the relationship. "We talked of many things but never of art," said Henri Matisse to the present writer, recalling those days in Morocco. "At the end of the season, I used to spread out all the work I had done and bring Morrice to see it. He would shake his head and mutter to himself, but never once did he express any comment. Never once did he offer to show me in return what he had painted."

After the War, about 1919, the Canadian advanced towards a new freedom and a new independence. He had

discovered what it was that he could absorb from Matisse; the rest he cast aside or forgot. The tropical richness of the vegetation, the flamboyant colouring of sky and landscape in Trinidad, to which he made, in 1921, the last of his several West Indian voyages, provided him with the inspiration he needed. A new synthesis was before him. The brush comes into its own. That pattern which had been merely a husk is now less a pattern and more a lyrical organization of virtuosity, of broad strokes, blues for the branches of the palm-tree, green for its trunk, yellow and red for the bushes, and a brilliant white for the negro seated on a bench: we write of a picture now in the possession of Mr. Huntly Drummond of Montreal (see Plate IV).

A hint of the impression his latest work might have made, if he had lived longer, and had not produced only a meagre six or seven finished compositions of Trinidad and Jamaica scenes—the others can hardly be called completed canvases—is found in a note written by the late P. G. Konody, the London critic, in November, 1921. Explaining that "the spirit of adventure is as pronounced in British as it is in French art, although the first impulse still generally emanates from Paris," he goes on to say of two works, one by Matisse, one by Morrice: "Even Matisse has lost the power to shock. His 'Sur l'herbe' will be calmly judged as an uninspired and rather dull performance, which can cause neither surprise, nor anger, nor enthusiasm. Indeed, the Canadian, J. W. Morrice, in his 'Paysage, Trinidad,' carries Matisse's typical style of calligraphic synthesis further: sea and beach and cliffs are reduced by him almost to decoratively arranged symbols." The criticism of the same picture written by the art-editor of *The Times*, was even more favourable: "Mr.

J. W. Morrice, always charming, is more fantastic and also more real than usual in his Trinidad landscape."

If James Wilson Morrice be the greatest painter that Canada can boast, he was also an artist who managed, alone of all Canadians, to fit into the minor ranks of European achievement. Yet his best work was so personal; so much, at other times, was he learning and so intently from greater masters, that he exercised little direct influence outside his own country. At one period there were, nevertheless, in Paris a small number of English and American students more or less ardently interested in his painting. These men, in particular, aped him in his method of preparing out-door sketches.

"Morrice, so far as I know," wrote Muriel Ciolkowski in the *Canadian Forum* after his death, "was never seen to carry visible painting kit, his complete outfit consisting of a small box which could fit like a cigar-case into one of the pockets of his dapper tweed suit, and which held his panels, his brushes and made-out palette." According to other witnesses, he carried two boxes, one a Venetian cigar-case for his brushes, the other a small container for his panel and palette. Gerald Festus Kelly, R.A., claims, indeed, that Morrice invented this particular type of container which has since come more commonly into use. In his studio, he possessed in addition a long holder in which sketches were arranged and locked. These panels, for which he was famous, are something more than mere *pochades* or loose notes taken in the open air; they are nearer, although smaller in size, to Constable's organized sketches from which larger pictures could be made.

It is related of him that, after working in his studio in the morning, he would proceed in the afternoon, umbrella in hand, box and brushes in pocket, to some spot previously chosen. There he would sit down and, by the

placing of delicate patches of colour on a tiny panel, which, in itself, was no larger than an envelope, he would build up a minute picture, the form of which depended entirely on subtle contrasts of tone, the gray of a building against the green of foliage or the red of a woman's blouse against purple shade on a gravelled path. A rhythmical outline, running brokenly round a figure or round a mass of verdure, done sensitively with a pencil (exactly as in similar work by Bonnard and Vuillard), came to be added as his art matured.

A few water-colours survive. They are not in the flowing style of the English masters of this medium; they are heavy and opaque, as if in oils: here again the manner is that of Bonnard. His figure compositions, over which he laboured heavily at times, never seem completely realized. That subtle sense of values, so useful in landscape, needed to be completed by something more firm in form for his portraits and nudes; as it is, they tend to be too much like imitations, at first, of Whistler, afterwards of Bonnard.

Unlike the true Impressionists, Morrice rarely after his student days did any easel pictures in the open air. His larger compositions were done in the studio; they were almost always enlargements made directly from outdoor sketches. Thus the local sense of atmosphere, that makes a panel of Paris foliage and skies vibrate in a translucent grayness or which makes one of his Canadian sketches shine in the cold brilliance of a Quebec winter, was changed in his canvases for less objective and more personal colouring and surface rhythms.

If *sedentary* is a word that can be applied to distinguish one technique of painting from another, then Morrice may be said to have been a sedentary painter. He was ensconced in an armchair, when at work in the

PLATE I.—THE RACE COURSE, ST. MALO
First exhibited in Paris, 1907, now in the collection of the Art Association of Montreal.

PLATE II.—THE FERRY, QUEBEC

First exhibited in Paris, 1907, now in the possession of Wm. Scott and Sons, Montreal.

PLATE III.—LANDSCAPE, TANGIERS
First exhibited in Paris, 1912, now in the collection of Mrs. Lilias Torrence Newton, Montreal.

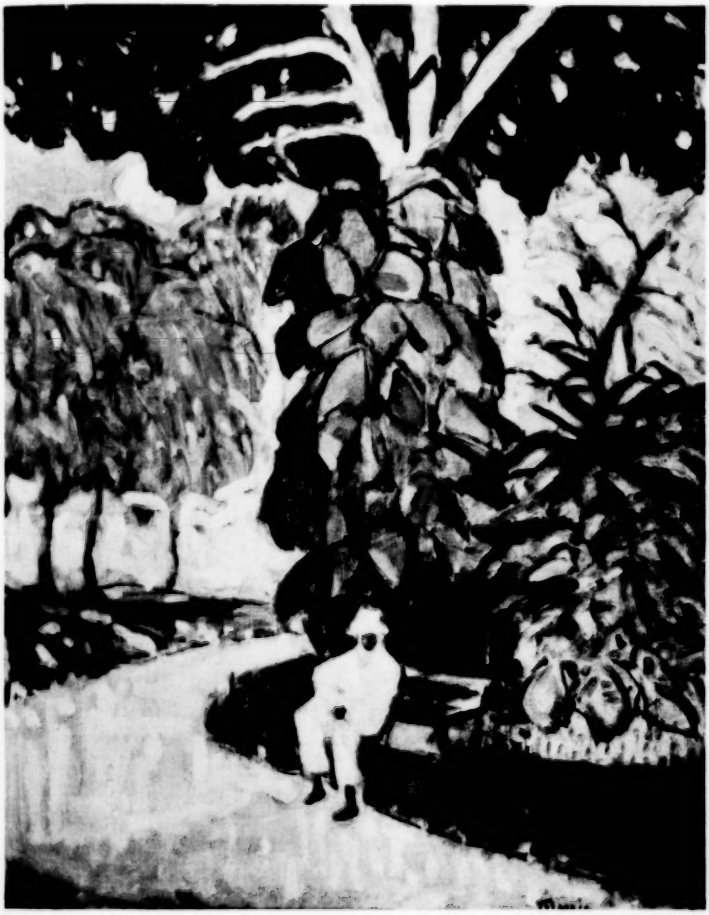

PLATE IV.—IN A GARDEN, WEST INDIES

Painted about 1919-21, now in the collection of Huntly Drummond, Esq., Montreal.

studio; he sat, usually at café tables, to do his panels. Never did he stand, and while he was busy painting a panel he drank and usually heavily. Towards five o'clock in the afternoon the saucers would begin to pile up beside him. To work thus was easy enough in Paris, but in Canada there were difficulties. He used to install himself in a tavern on a street of Quebec's lower town, whence he would rush out to put down a few touches of the winter scene and return to take a sip of whiskey before the stove.

That the man drank to excess cannot be denied, but so did Conder, so also did Charles Cottet, the fine painter who was numbered among the Canadian's associates in the exclusive *Société Nouvelle*, of which Rodin was president. As far as his panels are concerned, it seems more than likely that alcohol prompted an easy and uninhibited movement to his brush. As for his studio compositions, he always did them in the morning when he was sober. Towards the end of his life his constitution, however, became more and more disturbed by indulgence. He appears then to have shown extreme irritability of temperament and also to have been slightly careless in the preparation of his canvases.

"Hasn't he had too much to drink?" asked Arthur frigidly.

"Much," answered Susie promptly; "but he's always in that condition, and the further he gets from sobriety the more charming he is. He's the only man in this room of whom you'll never hear a word of evil. The strange thing is that he's very nearly a great painter. He has the most fascinating sense of colour in the world, and the more intoxicated he is, the more delicate and beautiful his painting. Sometimes, after more than the usual number of aperitifs, he will sit down in a cafe to do a sketch, with his hand so shaky that he can hardly hold a brush; he has to wait for a favourable moment, and then he makes a jab at the panel. And the immoral thing is that each of these little jabs is lovely. He's the most delightful interpreter of Paris I know, and when you've seen his sketches—he's done hundreds, of unimaginable grace and beauty

and feeling and distinction—you can never see Paris in the same way again."

Susie is talking about Morrice. The passage is from *The Magician*, an early novel by Somerset Maugham. The conversation takes place in the "Chien Noir," or, to give it its proper title, the "Chat Blanc." This was a small restaurant in the Rue d'Odessa near the Montparnasse railway station in Paris. Thirty years ago, it used to be the meeting place of a varied assembly of artists and writers, some American, some English. The chapters of Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, that have Paris for their scene, depict, in substance, its atmosphere and environment. Morrice arrived frequently to dine, and here Clive Bell, Arnold Bennett, and Somerset Maugham grew to know him intimately. The impress of his personality was strong upon them.

Morrice dined with me and stayed till 1 a.m. He has the joy of life in high degree and he likes living alone. "I enjoy everything," he said. "I got up this morning and I saw an old woman walking along and she was the finest old woman I ever did see. She was a magnificent old woman, and I was obliged to make a sketch of her. Then there was the *marchand de quatre saisons*. His cry is so beautiful. I began to enjoy myself immediately I got out of bed. It is a privilege to be alive."

This is one of several similar entries in the journals of Arnold Bennett, its date being May 16, 1905. One has only to compare it with the description of the painter, Priam Farll, in his novel *Buried Alive*, to see how directly Bennett has drawn on his memory of the Canadian for his picture of the timid artist, who retired in the disguise of a butler to live in Putney.

Morrice died on January 23, 1924, in Tunis. What they may have carved for his epitaph in that little English cemetery above the mosques and gardens where he lies buried, I do not know but the appreciation of him written

by Henri Matisse to Armand Dayot, in 1926, at the time of a retrospective exhibition of his paintings in Paris, would have served well enough:

> You know the artist with his delicate vision, finding pleasure, with a touching tenderness, in the rendering of landscapes with closely allied values.
>
> He was, socially speaking, a true gentleman, a good comrade never lacking in wit and humour. He had, as everyone knows, an unfortunate addiction to whisky. . . . I don't know what further I should tell you about him. He was a Canadian, of Scottish origin. His family was rich, he himself very rich, but he would not display it. He was always wandering over hill and vale, like some migratory bird but without any definite landing place.[2]

[2]"Vous connaissez l'artiste à l'oeil delicat, se complaisant avec une tendresse touchante dans la traduction de paysages aux valeurs rapprochées.

"C'était, comme homme, un vrai gentleman, bon camarade de beaucoup d'ésprit, d'humour. Il avait, tout le monde le sait, la fâcheuse passion du whiskey. . . . Je ne sais quoi vous dire de plus. Il était Canadien de race écossaise, de famille riche, lui-même très riche, mais il ne le montrait pas. It était toujours par monts et par vaux, un peu comme un oiseau migrateur mais sans point d'atterrissage bien fixe."

SOPHOCLES THE DRAMATIST

E. T. Owen

SOPHOCLEAN drama, like Shakespearean, is becoming more and more blurred by interpretations. Critics, in their natural desire to say something new, come to regard the object of their criticism as a field for the exercise of their own ingenuity, and flatteringly ascribe to their author the subtleties of which in the process they find themselves capable. For instance, it should be axiomatic that the profundity of a great dramatist is not achieved by the easy method of suppressing material facts, of setting his audience puzzles to solve with insufficient data; and yet it is often the gaps in the dramatist's argument that are seized upon as containing the fundamental meaning of a play. I think we should assume as a starting-point in all our interpretations, that, so far as the actual events of his story are concerned, the dramatist is to be taken at his plain word; also, and even more important, we should keep in mind that what we are contemplating is a play, not an incident of real life, in which motives may be veiled and unseen acts may be a matter of doubt and surmise. In a play unknown events, unknown motives do not occur (except in so far as the audience's knowledge may represent the unknown); the persons exist in their words and their acts—no more; and we have no right to use the dramatic difficulties and compromises, the necessary short-cuts and stretches of probability, for the purpose either of complicating the psychology or otherwise deepening the meaning of a play. What we are not told is done, is not done; beyond our ken there is no action, nothing happens; a *dramatis persona* does no more than is set down for him. In brief, it is a first

principle that you cannot judge or interpret a play by what is not there. A dramatist's first purpose is to make what happens plain; he is not trying to hide his meaning.

Consider the case of the double burial in the *Antigone*. These are the facts as given: In the Prologue Antigone announces her resolve to perform the burial rites on her dead brother, the traitor Polynices, although she knows it is forbidden by Creon, the King of Thebes. Here, and here alone, she can do so without taking the Chorus into her confidence, and, as the poet obviously wishes to give the impression at this stage that she stands absolutely alone in her defiance of Creon, he takes advantage of the opportunity offered by the Prologue to emphasize her isolation; he shows her appealing in vain to her sister, the one person who, she thought, might feel as she did in the matter. At any rate, it is understood at the end of the Prologue that Antigone has gone forth to put her words into instant act. It is this knowledge that gives dramatic value to Creon's proclamation, which immediately follows the entrance song of the Chorus. So placed, it is not just a starting-point of action, but communicates a dramatic thrill because we know that even as he speaks his orders are being disobeyed. (It is in this sort of thing that Sophocles shows his skill, not by creating confusing ambiguities.) Instead of bringing in the captive Antigone now (which is all that the story in itself requires), he delays the discovery; one of the men set to guard the corpse enters with the news that the body has been found, already sprinkled with dust and so technically buried; and it is not till the next episode or scene that Antigone is brought before Creon as the culprit, caught this time pouring libations upon the body. This second visit of Antigone's to the

corpse has, since Jebb first called attention to its lack of clear motivation, become a sort of stock problem for which every writer on the *Antigone* feels himself bound to offer a solution, preferably a new one.[1] Now a dramatist's main consideration always and everywhere is to create situations as dramatic as possible, and it is often necessary to sacrifice other considerations, even strict motivation, to it. The good dramatist knows how far he can go in this direction without raising intellectual doubts in his audience; and, it may be remarked, an audience is more ready to make allowances in such matters than dramatic critics assume. Critics apparently value consistency and the strict logic of events above all artistic virtues; dramatists and audiences put dramatic effectiveness first. So I venture to say in this instance, the so-called puzzle of the double burial is the invention of those who have time to look behind the dramatic situation and evolve possible interpretations of the given facts. Dramatically there is no puzzle. Sophocles knew that his audience would not question the lack of strict motivation for Antigone's second journey so long as he could thereby increase their dramatic enjoyment. It was necessary that Antigone should be discovered and caught; but Sophocles wanted Creon to hear of the flouting of his decree before he knew the culprit was Antigone. Why? Well, principally, to make two scenes out of one, to double and prolong the dramatic interest. It is really more than doubled, for, besides the mere numerical increase in scenes, the first of the two considerably enhances the effectiveness of the second, partly through making the audience wait for the great moment they know is coming, partly because their expectation

[1]See the serious discussion of some of these in J. E. Harry, *Greek Tragedy*, 1933, I, pp. 118-9.

of Creon's anger can be thus fully established and heightened. Also, it helps to make Creon's inflexible attitude towards his niece more readily acceptable to the imagination; he has doubly committed himself, dramatically, to extreme measures before he knows who the offender is—first, by the solemn asseverations with which he accompanies his proclamation, second, by the fury of rage into which the message and manner of the watchman throw him. After his proud, self-confident speech it is almost as if the laugh were turned on him, and we know that being thus made a fool of will harden him finally against the offender. You have only to imagine Antigone being brought in by the watchman on his first appearance to see how much would have been lost in sheer effectiveness. The poet, instead of being content to get his story told and trusting to the intrinsic interest of its given incidents to carry it through, has seen how to get the utmost dramatic value out of them, by the skilful adjustment of tone and emphasis, by suspense and the effect of climax. It is this instinct for the effective that makes a successful drama, not the raising of psychological problems. Motive-hunting is not the chief pre-occupation of a dramatic audience, nor its liveliest source of interest. All that is really required on that score, I believe, is that a deed should be understandable enough not to disturb the intellectual assent at the moment.

Another "problem"—from the *Ajax*: Ajax has left his tent to go to the seashore in order, as the audience knows, to kill himself; a messenger from the Greek camp brings to Tecmessa and the Chorus the command of Teucer to keep Ajax safely guarded for that day because of Calchas' announcement that "the wrath of Athena will pursue him for this day only." I believe it is im-

possible, even if one had hours to think it out, to find a rationalistic equivalent of Athena's limited hostility; I mean, we cannot translate it into terms of facts that will really fit the circumstances. And we are not required to do so; such inquiries take us away from the play, not into the heart of it as sometimes seems to be supposed. Professor Goodell, diagnosing Ajax's mental condition as a case of paranoia, explains: "In making Calchas announce that Athena's wrath would pursue him only that day, it is as if the poet meant to put in theological language the fact that we should put in psychological terms: if he could digest for one day the disgrace he had brought upon himself, reflection might refine his sense of humiliation to humility. That would be his moral and physical salvation."[2] But this does not cover the facts: Athena has shown her wrath by baffling Ajax's revenge, preventing his crime, and making a fool of him; it is not the slaughter of the sheep and cattle that constitutes his real guilt; the situation is not one to be cleared by a mere change in Ajax's mood; he is known to have intended the assassination of the Greek leaders; that is the serious matter, and it is hard to imagine how in any real sense the consequences of that attempt can be nullified by the lapse of a few hours.

These things must not be thought after these ways; the artistic explanation is enough. Having planned to stage Ajax's suicide, the dramatist has to remove the Chorus, and therefore must supply some sufficiently convincing motive for their removal. Ajax has departed, as the audience knows, to his death; a choral ode has followed, and now the normal thing to look for would be the coming of a messenger to announce and describe the death. But Sophocles plans to present that scene, and

[2] *Athenian Tragedy*, 1920, p. 221.

therefore uses his messenger to clear the stage for it and at the same time to increase the feeling of suspense with which the audience is waiting to hear of the accomplishment of Ajax's purpose. This feeling of suspense finds its dramatic expression in the renewed anxiety of the Chorus. Hearing, from a source they cannot doubt, that Ajax is in deadly peril because he has left his tent, they feel that it is imperative to find him at once. That, it seems to me, is the true explanation of the Calchas passage. The dramatist, having given us the dramatic pleasure of seeing the Chorus and Tecmessa deceived and lulled into false confidence by Ajax's words, has now in some way to restore their fears in order to account for their instant pursuit of him. It is really our knowledge that Ajax has gone to slay himself which has to be conveyed to the Chorus; and so his resolve, the true state of his mind, must be externalized, that is, conveyed to them by some external agency, and, as no one but himself knows his purpose, that external agency must be supernatural.

Does this mean, then, that Sophocles has not cared to rationalize the significance of the limit set on Athena's hostility? That is what I think. Athena is Athena, not a symbol of something else, and is no more to be rationalized than the ghost of Hamlet's father. The gods have the right, even the duty, of acting mysteriously, and inadequate motivation of their acts may even be dramatically effective in so far as it reproduces the sense of incalculable powers working their mysterious will through human events. It is, we might say, rational for gods to behave irrationally, for that is ultimately the rôle man has assigned them in the scheme of things; they are the explanation of the inexplicable. Sophocles takes advantage of this attribute to achieve his immediate

dramatic purpose, and so gains, too, for the next scene—the death scene—the additional pathos which comes from the suggestion that Ajax's death is not, after all, as he thinks it is, inevitable, the only way out. Frankly, I think that Sophocles often caught the nearest way in such incidental matters and that this is right in drama. The play must go forward at all costs, and in the march of events there must be no fumbling with obscurities; when a difficulty arises, take hold of it boldly, and trust to the momentum of the action to carry your audience past it. This is perhaps too summary a way of describing the method; but we should recognize as critics what we undoubtedly accept as spectators, that such short-circuiting is sometimes necessary in presenting a story with the brevity and pointedness required of a stage action, and we should not be too ready to see deep significance in imperfectly explained occurrences. The significance of a drama is to be sought in the whole effect, not in incidental lapses of coherence.

The object of any work of literary art, in so far as it is a work of art, is to create a complete emotional experience out of a succession of emotional impressions. The art of story-telling aims at doing so through the telling of a story; that is, the skill of a story-teller consists in the ordering of incidents so as to make them not merely logically coherent or plausible (as criticism often seems to assume), but to make them, both in their place and their order, emotionally effective. It is Sophocles' skill in doing this which makes his plays great, and any other questions we raise are pertinent only in so far as they bear on that skill. His purpose was to tell a story as well as it could be told within the conventions provided by Greek tragedy, and everything in his plays was ultimately controlled by that aim, and should be

measured in relation to it. Aristotle's analysis of what a tragedy should be is based largely on the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and he confines his attention, as Newman complains,[3] to investigating "the means of making a train of events striking or affecting," which is, as it seems to me, precisely what a critic of a Sophoclean tragedy should do. Sophocles' master in the essentials of his method was, as Aristotle saw, Homer; he discerned the secret of the immense dramatic appeal of the *Iliad*, and bent his efforts to reproducing its effect within the narrow compass and with the straitened means of a dramatic performance. And he has, in some measure at least, repeated Homer's triumph, because he has known how, in his chosen medium, to order his hearers' emotional response in the same successful way and with the same effect of profound significance, because he has gone to the root of the matter, and, despite the obstructions and distractions of a medium originally shaped for a different purpose, has managed to make it serve the fundamental Homeric aim, to follow the fundamental Homeric method. He saw that his real task was to choose and arrange and treat the incidents in such a way that, besides conveying the necessary facts of the story, they might constitute a continuous and mounting series of points of emotional interest, each one sharpened to the utmost poignancy of which it was capable.

I have enlarged upon this fact for two reasons. First, because the artistry of Sophocles is too often taken to consist merely of the mechanical skill with which he makes the story run—how he manages to indicate the whole course of the story on the curve of such a single continuous action as can be presented in a play; and having considered and admired that, we drop the thing as a

[3] *Poetry with reference to Aristotle's Poetics.*

work of art and turn to its more serious aspects. Secondly, and following from this, because the known religious associations of Greek tragedy incline us to occupy ourselves with questions that are at best merely preliminary to the understanding of the play, and generally outside it.

Sophocles' tragedies have a religious basis and a religious reference of course. Tragedy was, by origin, a religious ceremony, and the tragedian by tradition, a teacher of morals and religion. Sophocles supplies this basis as a matter of course, gives his story its due orientation, and gets every ounce he can of dramatic value out of this religious association. I do not mean to suggest that he was either shallowly conventional or insincere in his attitude, but that we make a mistake if we accept the theological assumptions on which the story rests as representing explicitly Sophocles' personal beliefs. I do not think that we should ask what fact of life the Athena of the *Ajax* stood for in the poet's own mind, or what significance he attached to the Delphic oracle, any more than we should ask how exactly he imagined the shirt of Nessus could poison its wearer or what virtue there really was in Philoctetes' bow to make it so necessary to the capture of Troy. These things are put not to provoke question, but to forestall it. He asks us by these means to grant him the circumstances which account for the dramatic situation and give it, to start with, its emotional colour. In brief, they constitute the fictional convention, the agreement to believe which makes the story at once credible and impressive. It was the accepted way of lifting the story to the tragic plane, of stamping it as of general significance. There is always this trouble with an artistic convention, once it has dropped out of currency, has ceased, that is, to be

a convention, that it encounters an irrelevant resistance of thought; it provokes questions that were never meant to be raised; it seems to stand on the same footing as the rest as an imitation of life, and accordingly we judge it like the rest by reference to life and its probabilities. So we find critics seriously discussing the plausibility of Lear's dividing up his kingdom on the basis of an oral examination into the extent of his daughters' filial affections. These are accepted ways of launching the improbable situation on which the dramatic effect depends. It is not in such things that the power and value of a play reside, nor even its meaning; and I think in the case of Sophocles we waste our time by paying so much attention to the religious implications of the assumptions on which his plays rest. We are worrying about the framework. The stories demand a certain religious or supernatural setting, and we insist on a rational interpretation of this setting, and, imputing to the poet the ideas it implies, follow them out till the play seems almost an incidental thing.

In the Prologue of the *Ajax* Athena thus reads to Odysseus the lesson of the spectacle of the lunatic Ajax: "Look at this sight and beware of speaking an arrogant word against the gods, nor lift a swelling port because you excel your fellows in strength of arm or heaped-up wealth: a day brings down as a day upraises all mortal things. It is the humble-minded the gods love, and they hate the evil." That is not Sophocles proffering a solution of life's enigmas; it is the sheerest commonplace, and meant to be, not something to puzzle over but something to accept. He announces the familiar theme so that we shall all know where we are and where we are going and shall observe the scenes that follow in the proper mood and with the proper expectation. It

creates the necessary background of solemnity which gives to the events their appearance of depth and significance.

But more than that, it is a way of giving dramatic value to the audience's familiarity with the story. The fact that the outcome was present from the beginning, not only in the dramatist's mind but in the audience's mind, had to be taken into account; *i.e.*, the end had to figure actively and manifestly as belonging to the dramatic intention, and the Fate which in one form or other seems to dominate Greek tragedy, is at bottom the necessary dramatic accommodation of the audience's familiarity with the story; the end of the story is furnished with a dramatic rôle within the story, as a curse or an oracle or a god announcing his purpose. Homer had already pointed the way to this solution of the difficulty, and his method fitted nicely with the required religious tone and purpose of tragedy; the necessary artistic interest of Greek tragedy, that of seeing events fit together to bring about a foreknown end, becomes still further integrated as the religious lesson of tragedy, how men fulfil by their deeds their predestined end. The plot, because it is known, is fitly dramatized as the design of God.

So to the pleasure of seeing how the thing works itself out to its given conclusion, is added the immense dramatic thrill of feeling oneself in touch with ultimate things. Dramatists know the dramatic appeal of the suggestion that we are facing the riddle of human life; they know it as well as those critics feel it who seek to discover how far this or that dramatist has unravelled it in his plays. Only a great dramatist—and I should add, a great poet—can handle this device effectively, so as to make the suggestion strong enough and impressive

enough without thrusting too patently upon our notice the inevitable absence of an explicit answer. The background must be vast and profound, but above all it must remain dark and mysterious. The traditions of Greek tragedy put the instrument for securing this effect right into the tragedian's hand, and while the way he uses it may be to some extent indicative of his personal attitude, its mere presence is not; it was a necessary part of his machinery which had to be artistically accommodated.

The fact that the spectators are thus watching the events from a double level of vision is the basis of Sophocles' dramatic technique in the sense that it conditions the sort of emotional response he chiefly looks for. Every critical speech is constructed to have two references, and the contrast between them gives it the peculiar flavour of significance which imparts the dramatic thrill. The consequences are always present to point what is said and done. The persons speak and act not just to the purpose of the immediate situation, as they think, but always, for the audience, in the full context of the whole circumstances; and that context being, by the Greek convention, the ultimate truth of things, their voices ring with overtones of apparently the deepest significance, against the vast sounding-board that the convention supplies.

The constant presence in the spectator's mind of this contrast is the poet's main guiding line in his selection of incidents, in his composition of the speeches of his persons, and so in the characters he assigns to them. They are made what they are so that against the background of the spectator's knowledge they may cast the most definite shadow. Oedipus is what he is, neither to justify nor to criticize the ways of God to man, but for artistic

reasons—to heighten the dramatic power of the successive situations; he says what he does, not to exhibit his character but to thrill the audience. That is, to put it summarily, the story being a terrible one—as Aristotle remarks, so terrible that anyone would shudder at hearing the bare facts—Sophocles makes Oedipus a man to whom it is especially terrible that such terrible things should happen. He constructs the character to heighten the effect of the story as a whole, and of the various stages by which he plans to present it.

A play is made up of people saying things, and while it is important, of course, that what they say should help to unfold the story, it is still more important that what they say should thrill the audience. That is at any rate the method of a Sophoclean tragedy. The high lights of emotional interest are in the main great speeches. The poet sets the stage for them, and when they come, the great business of the drama is being done; for in them the drama of the situation is being dwelt upon and realized. The tragic hero *acts* as he must according to the dictates of the story. He *speaks*, not to display himself; he speaks, and therefore is what he is, to emotionalize the situations. He is the event conceived in its most moving aspect, to grip the imagination and swing it along the level of a high emotion.

The unit is the emotional pattern. Neither character nor thought nor plot (that is, the arrangement of the incidents) is important except in relation to it; and they should be considered by the critic only as they contribute to it. In analysing both thought and character, what we should analyse is their artistry, how they develop and give body to the emotional lines on which the play is built, and we should not use either to set up a sort of invisible structure running parallel

to the visible one. The "thoughts" a play contains are not meant to carry us outside it to a new synthesis; they too are part of the artistic pattern; they bring into the play the intellectual colours that are appropriate, that are needed to produce the full imaginative effect. And the character, as I have said, exists to rouse as keenly as possible in the given situation the appropriate emotion, and is consistent to the extent necessary to form the basis of, and give direction to, the appropriate emotion. We should not, in the interests of a speaker's character, force his words beyond the requirements of the situation; we should not pursue them beyond the plain business of the play. It is true that sometimes it is difficult to determine why a dramatist makes a speaker say just this or that; which means, I think, either that he was careless and has left out something that was in his mind which suggested the remark to him, or, it may be, that he deliberately aimed at obscurity, in which case we spoil the effect intended if we insist on clearing it up. But usually, it seems to me, it is our over-emphasis on the importance of character-drawing for its own sake that creates unnecessary obscurities. We forget the play in the joy of adding subtlety to subtlety, looking for what is hidden in a speaker's words. I lay down the general proposition that the meaning of the words of a play lies or is intended to lie on the surface, and has to do solely with the artistic interests of the play, and that the motive for a speaker's words is not to be sought in the hidden places of his soul but in the needs of artistry. For the most important persons in a play are not the *dramatis personae* but the audience, and the reason why such and such a thing is said or done should be explained not primarily in terms of character and psychological motivation but with reference to the emotional response

of the audience. The poet does seek, of course, to create characters such as would account for events' turning out as they must turn out. But such a method, even perfectly carried out, is not the way the crowns of the drama are won. Perfect motivation is not enough, not nearly enough. Though it can add greatly, no doubt, to the power and satisfactoriness of a play, it is not the vital thing about the characters—at least it is not what chiefly guided Sophocles in creating his characters. The plot is indeed, as Aristotle says, the starting-point of the tragedy, and is the world in relation to which the *dramatis personae* move and have their being, which circumscribes their characters and their activities, but the motive for assigning to them the words they speak, or even for selecting their actions, is not to prove the validity of the plot by reference to life and psychology, but to mark and make the emotional value of what is happening.

A rapid review of certain aspects of the *Ajax* will serve best to illustrate concretely what I mean by interpreting a play by its artistry, just because its merits are not perhaps as obvious to us as its shortcomings. Its central plot is simply this, the steps by which Ajax moves to his suicide. Sophocles has little to do here but to hold and develop one situation. There is no series of events to unfold. So far as external incidents are concerned the story is largely stationary. It is not even the growth of Ajax's resolution. The audience knows that he is to die by his own hand, and the poet, instead of asking them to assume that they do not know, uses their knowledge. Ajax, when he first appears, is already resolved on suicide. The only thing that changes is his mood, and the dramatic incidents of this, the central portion of the play, its heart, are his four great speeches.

They do not hold up the dramatic movement; as I have said, in them the true dramatic movement is in full swing. That is our growing realization of the full emotional significance of Ajax, this Ajax, committing suicide; the action is the will of Ajax withstanding all that can be brought against his resolve. The interest, therefore, lies wholly in hearing him speak, in seeing him meet the various aspects of the situation as presented either by himself or another. But this interest is wholly emotional, not analytical or psychological. The poet's object is to bring Ajax home to us as a personality, not that we may understand him, but that we may feel the impact of a great emotion. The dramatic progress takes place, so to speak, within us, and it is simply an emotional progress. That is the case always in great drama, but normally there are external events also to assist this progress. And certainly, I think, the *Ajax* shows the strain of trying to make a drama of a practically static external situation.

But here we must remember that it was not to the Athenians as it is to us. Their artistic expectations were formed on a different tradition from ours, and therefore they found a dramatic interest where we do not. So my critical principle, "Look to the artistry, first and foremost, for explaining the why and wherefore of things in a play," must here be interpreted in the light of an artistic tradition to which we do not immediately and spontaneously respond. The idioms of an alien artistic language must be accepted.

The very fact that it is poetic drama is a stumbling-block to many in accepting it as fully and purely drama. Poetic drama is dramatic through poetry, not in spite of it; it uses poetic effects to attain dramatic effects. But, of course, it assumes a public that is prepared for, and

capable of responding to, the poetic medium. We have so far lost the tradition that we find it difficult to accept even a Shakespearean play as all of a piece, that "we are almost persuaded that in Shakespeare the poetry was sometimes and somehow not merely different from the drama but its enemy."[4] We distinguish between poetic effects and dramatic effects, and the distinction is for us a real one. But genuine poetic drama comes into existence when there is no such distinction, when a pattern of poetic effects actually produces a dramatic effect on its audience. For the real drama in any given instance always takes place in the mind of the beholder, and the contemporary dramatist knows how to use the accepted medium of communication to set it moving effectively there. If there are universal laws of drama, they are operative within the given medium and in relation to it; they do not dictate what it shall be; and what is dramatic in one artistic environment may well be undramatic in another.

Sophocles had his audience in mind when he composed a play; he was concerned to make it dramatic to them, and their minds were tuned, through long tradition, to respond to effects which for us clog and slow up the dramatic movement. The thing was, artistically, first a poem of an established kind, and had to make its appeal strictly as such. The given formal elements—songs, *kommoi*, narratives, stichomythies, debates—were not only means but ends, valued for their own sakes; even the poetic phrases and devices, not just ways to convey and heighten the things said, but themselves a source of artistic pleasure, essential threads in the emotional pattern. In short, poetry being the basic medium, an immediate sensitiveness to the accepted ways of poetry was as

[4] "Modern Poetic Drama" (*Times Literary Supplement*, May 24, 1934).

much the condition of understanding the art as the corresponding acceptance of the ways of music is necessary to the intelligibility of that art.

This consideration should save us again from overstrained interpretations of passages that strike us as undramatic or in some way flat and heavy. A constant reading of Aeschylus serves perhaps better than anything to keep the judgment on the right track. If you imagine an audience which got a dramatic thrill from the scene between Pelasgus and the Chorus in the *Supplices*, from that in the *Seven* where the scout describes to Eteocles the appearance of each of the Argive champions, or the argument before the court of the Areopagus in the *Eumenides*, then there is nothing surprising even in the debating scenes with which Sophocles has thought fit to close the *Ajax*. With our "natural" artistic presuppositions we are positively shocked by these scenes. The attempt to keep the play going by the prolonged exchange of personal abuse between Teucer and Menelaus, and again between Teucer and Agamemnon, rouses in us, probably, no other emotion than irritation; but we must not judge the Athenian response to it by our own. That is, it is not artistically what it seems to us, for, as I have said before, the mind of the beholder is an essential part of the artist's instrument. It is, in fact, *the* instrument that he plays on. And this sort of interest (I mean the sheer verbal interest in debate, of watching word matched against word, sentence against sentence) being associated by usage with two-actor scenes, the thing would come, expected and satisfying, upon the ear, as the right music in the right place. So, while it is, quite properly I think, judged jarring and tedious in a story, in a τραγῳδία, being technically appropriate, it may perform the part assigned to it smoothly and

effectively. Sophocles here, whether because the material baffled him in its meagreness of incident or because he had not yet got into his stride, was content to fall back upon a formal interest and make his artistic point in the old style. For, after all, it is natural that the artistic current of the form should sometimes catch him and divert him into the old channels.

In defence of the dramatic fitness of this concluding part of the *Ajax*, a great deal has been made of the point that Ajax was, to the Athenians, a hero not only in the Homeric sense, but in the religious sense. "This Ajax," says Jebb, "is the same to whom the Athenian spectators, like their fathers before them, had been taught to pay divine honours . . . . The veto upon his burial raises an issue still more momentous, for Athenians, than the question whether Ajax is to live or die, *viz.*, the issue whether he is, or is not, to attain the sanctity of a hero."[5] Now, of course, I cannot assert, and do not want to, that such a thought never crossed Sophocles' mind in composing the play, or the spectator's mind in witnessing it. It probably had its influence, but I do not believe that the dramatist depended upon that feeling to justify these closing scenes. The point they make is, I think, an artistic one.

Once the form of the thing is admitted to be of lively interest in itself to its audience, appropriate and technically in keeping, we can see its dramatic value without going outside the artistic boundaries of the play to find it. By these two scenes the dramatist puts the would-be punishers of Ajax in the wrong. Supposing he had not represented them thus, but either as generous enemies forgiving all in view of great past services, or even as stern just men acknowledging his greatness,

[5]Introduction to his *Ajax*.

but insisting upon some signal punishment for a dreadful crime, it would make, I think, an unsatisfactory ending, just because it would leave our sympathy with Ajax no chance to express itself. Up to this point, the stress has been, as it had to be, on the guilt of Ajax. Ajax has conquered us not through his virtues, not through making us feel that he is a fundamentally virtuous man misunderstood, but, like Achilles in the *Iliad*, through the impression of personal power. Professor Norwood has even been led to make the harsh statement that Ajax is a magnificent brute who is better dead,[6] but I suspect that in saying so he has been influenced more by the after-reflections of his moral judgment than by his immediate feelings. The important thing is that Ajax is spiritually worth all the others in the play, or, rather I should say, he seems so, because he is imaginatively worth all the rest. At any rate Ajax has won our sympathy, and now our sympathy has to be justified and satisfied. The first is accomplished through the scenes with Menelaus and Agamemnon. By showing them in such an unfavourable light, the poet creates in us something of the hatred that Ajax has felt towards them, so that for the time being we are almost persuaded that he has been in the right. Anyway we are confirmed and apparently justified in our desire to see Ajax in some sort win out over his enemies. For not only is the punishment they propose an outrage on all decent feeling, but still more outrageous are the insults they heap on the dead, their attempt to smirch his glory, to wipe out, as it were, the record of the *Iliad*, to remove his name from the roll of the great Achaean heroes. The *hybris* of Ajax, consisting in the first place just of inordinate pride in his prowess, is offset by the mean, petty *hybris* of little men

[6] *Greek Tragedy*, 1920, p. 135.

puffed out by authority. That is, surely, why the poet puts into the mouth of Teucer, just before the entrance of Odysseus, the reminder of the true Ajax of the *Iliad*. Against this background of petty spite the splendour of Ajax, however it may have been obscured, shines out again. I do not quite agree with Professor Norwood when he says, "In the *Ajax* the theme is not the hero's death, but his rehabilitation;" but so far I do agree: the fact that the great Ajax whom we knew in the *Iliad* is, so far as may be, given back to our admiration, is essential to the emotional satisfaction of the play. Sophocles has altered the story as it appeared in his probable source, the *Little Iliad*. For there Agamemnon did not refuse him all funeral rites, but directed that his body should not be burnt, but placed in a coffin and buried (according to Philostratus and J. G. Frazer, because he was a suicide).[7] Sophocles, by representing the Atreidae as refusing him any burial whatever and as actuated by mere spitefulness, has put their conduct in the worst light possible, and so in a way, as I have said, has justified, after the event, Ajax's judgment of them; and by according him full funeral rites he has, so far as the story allowed, restored him to honour.

Most Greek tragedies end with what may be called in a general way "reconciliation." It is perhaps not a good word, for it seems to imply the sort of ending which Aristotle deplored—"those who are the bitterest enemies in the course of the play, go off at the end as friends, and no one is killed by anybody." I do not mean anything as melancholy and disappointing as that. The dramatist plans to send us away with a sense that the conflict is ended, not just cut off to make, as we say, a strong curtain; and more than that, with a sense of peace attained. The

[7]Apollodorus, Loeb Classical Library, II, p. 220.

reconciliation takes place within us; the aim is to appease our feelings. That is the better word; it is an appeasement. These ancient dramatists really recognized that a drama should constitute a full and complete emotional experience, and the end is really an end, rounding off and releasing the feelings.[8]

Anyone who recalls the superb close of the *Iliad* will see that the ending here is in its way an adaptation and adjustment of the same method. The enemies are reconciled. Homer's task was the more difficult in that he had to make Achilles give up the full vengeance he had vowed, without weakening his character. But Ajax is dead, and safe from all imputation of relenting; he lies there still proud and unforgiving, triumphant in death, for notice Odysseus' words: "I too counted him my deadliest foe from the time when I was awarded the prize of Achilles' arms. But, though he was so, I would not, in return, seek to deprive him of his just deserts and deny that I knew him the best of all of us that came to Troy from Argos—except Achilles." Ajax is vindicated, but so is his enemy, and we are content now that Odysseus should have the arms of Achilles.

Now we can see why the Prologue is what it is. It is to prepare for this ending, to make it the consummating of an emotional expectation. Without it, or if Odysseus there had been drawn as violently bitter against Ajax, this would have been one of those huddled endings in which people suffer violent conversions in order to wind things up. Odysseus' attitude there prepares us for his attitude here. Probably by this time we have forgotten about Odysseus, but as soon as he enters there is surely a sense of light in the darkness. He brings with him

[8]For a more adequate treatment of the subject see E. E. Stoll, "Reconciliation in Tragedy" (UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO QUARTERLY, IV, pp. 11-33).

the memory of the larger understanding, the generosity of mind which he showed in the Prologue, and the resolution of the difficulty stands clear as something that has been involved from the beginning. The poem closes with a return of the theme with which it opened, satisfying both ear and mind.

THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

CARLETON STANLEY

HOW many speeches and articles and books have been composed at one time and another on the subject of university graduates' being the leaders in the community? The number must be past telling. The idea is certainly older than the deliberate study of methods of government and economics in universities, which is a comparatively recent development. Society has greatly changed, in outward appearance at least, and perhaps more essentially; but the universities have greatly changed also. Is it possible that the phrase which connects the two has insensibly become outworn and meaningless? And again what do we mean by leadership? At one time in this country, leaving politicians to one side for the moment, we had leadership from preachers, editors, from strong personalities in various learned professions—not excepting school-teaching—whose words were heard in no Babel of voices. Personalities may be as clear and striking now as formerly, but they shine like stars above the glaring lights of a city. The preacher competes, so to speak, with the radio, and a flood of illustrated Sunday papers. Is it the editorial, or the back-page advertisement, that is now read? In fact, in the offices of large Canadian newspapers it is now sometimes hard to discover who the editor is. Again, do we remember that one of the implications of leadership is a resolute critical faculty—a compound of sure knowledge and bold imagination? It seems to have been one of the qualities of Lenin that he saw most proposals in the light of past history, that he could weigh the subtler results of

their application, and so in a moment choose, reject, or modify. A slight change of scene, or the discovery of an oversight of his own, merely caused him to calculate afresh. He could criticize himself as well as his friends and his foes.

It was a hopeful saying,

> When half-gods go,
> The gods arrive.

It is clear, rather, from history, that when the leaders go the demagogues arrive, and after them worse creatures. Just at present some of the self-appointed leaders of the past have confessed their impotence, not directly, but by gazing round to the universities and asking why *they* have forsaken their calling. Every Canadian university recently received a circular from a newspaper proprietor (not an editor) which put this question not too delicately.

Is it worth while for a university graduate, in the comparative privacy of a university quarterly, to probe this question, and the other questions to which it leads? Perhaps it hardly occurs to a university man, of the older school at least, to think of these questions in a merely national way. Certainly not in an intensely national way. Nowadays especially this is true. And perhaps more so for Canadian university men. Not only are Canadian professoriates very cosmopolitan, from the necessities of the case; but Canada is part of a world-encircling Empire, and even then it is over-shadowed by another vast, rich, and powerful nation, speaking our speech, and in many respects like us, but at the same time unfathomably different. Again, it happens to us, as it happens to some other small countries, Holland for example, that most of our trade is foreign trade, so that we cannot fail to be interested in foreign affairs. At the beginning of this century we often described ourselves as

"the bread-basket of the Empire," and British capital enabled us to indulge in that boast. An allusion to that episode in our history would now produce a wry smile, and perhaps a tacit admission that all our strenuous efforts in that direction were nothing more than a frantic stake to Fortune, and not to the fortunes of the Empire merely. We have to take an international outlook, we often say to ourselves. But how far does the saying carry us? Is it just another phrase?

Some months ago I listened over the air to the prime minister of Great Britain talking to a large audience in the Guildhall, London. As soon as he came to deal with the international situation, with the affairs of Europe, with the American-British-Japanese Naval Conference, and so on, it at once became apparent that the audience, representative I should say of the political and commercial life of London, was passionately, enthusiastically in favour of world-peace and world-settlement. Every hopeful passage in the speech, every determined word on the necessity for preserving the peace and coming to an international understanding, was wildly applauded. I was, of course, one of many millions of people up and down the world listening to that plea for peace, and the applause with which it was greeted in the heart of the British Empire, and I was moved by that thought.

At the same time I found myself asking how many men, after all, do see into a plea like that. How many, for example, in our Canadian prairies know what they must do to preserve world-peace, what they must do to promote the welfare of that instrument of peace, the League of Nations? It is true that a plea for peace finds an echo in nearly every heart in the world at the present time. In fact, if it does not, you can be pretty sure that there are interests at stake of a private kind; because so

many all over the world, even in the countries which were not engaged in the last war, are still suffering directly or indirectly from the results of it.

But the peoples did not will the last war either. Their leaders found themselves helpless to prevent it, however, just as their leaders in later times have found themselves powerless to prevent the world's taking on a complexion very similar to the complexion of the world between 1910 and 1914. That is the question of questions. The world, with its heart in the right place, may still go to the devil. Civilization, without anyone's willing it, may just cease, and cease suddenly—I mean to say within the life-time of a man. It is a good thing, to be sure, that millions of men and women up and down the world should hear a plea for peace, because the popular will after all, let us make no mistake about it, is a very powerful thing. But is the popular intelligence capable of following an argument about the preservation of civilization?

We say among ourselves, ever so lightly and ever so glibly, that "civilization is the control over environment." But how many men see into a phrase like that, to say nothing of doing the thing and acting the thing described in the phrase? Let me illustrate. Anyone who has gone across the American-Canadian frontier in the last few years, anyone who has done business across it, or, still more, *tried* to do business across it, has remarked the violence of the swings up and down in the exchange between the two currencies. The ordinary man is capable of seeing that on the whole this is inconvenient to travellers; the ordinary man can see, or can easily be made to see, that this state of affairs paralyses trade. But ask him what is the cause of it, ask him above all what must be done to stop it, and he will throw up his hands. He is helpless, and particularly he is baffled by the suddenness

of it. Speed in an aeroplane he can understand, but speed in the workings of economic cause and effect he cannot understand.

Civilization! We have books now in Canada which we put into the hands of every high-school pupil in the country, which undertake to tell the whole story of civilizations: their rise, their fall, their decline, their absence, over the whole world, for the last six thousand years. True, it is a most useful thing to take synoptic views. Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History* may prove to be one of the great books. Even such a book as Wells's *Outline of History* has its uses, as an imaginative stimulus. But I am speaking of dogmatic, unimaginative text-books, which baldly claim to "tell everything," and which teachers and pupils take at face-value. Now, aside from a child's understanding such a stunning array of facts—to be frank, how many university professors could say what the salient facts were over so long a period as that?

The specialists tell us, and, of course, most of us are specialists in some one field or another, that these books are full of "howlers," that the authors, being obliged as they are to follow second-hand authorities over most of the fields which they cover, inevitably follow authorities that are out of date. They may be just recently out of date. And the philosophers warn us, and always have warned us, that the times of the past are a mystery to us:

> Die Zeiten der Vergangenheit
> Sind uns ein Buch mit sieben Siegeln.

If, then, it is so hard for ordinary men to understand the world of the past, how can ordinary men intelligently participate at the present (and they have to do it at the present, because that is the game) in managing the affairs of the world? Especially as the world has grown for every one of us so much larger? (We all know that when

we first encountered geography most of the central parts of Africa were marked "unexplored by white men," and in fact the first atlas I used of Canada showed that perhaps two-fifths of my country was unexplored by white men.) A world that is much more intricate and complicated even than the world was just before the last war and that moves ever so much faster than the world ever moved?

Again, we say that it has never been easy to govern a nation. But if it is not easy to govern a nation, how is it going to be easy to govern the nations? Many of us believe that the League of Nations is our only hope. I firmly believe so, but I do not think the League of Nations is going to do much out of hand. One who has had to do with the League since its beginning has written that for its own good it came into being much too quickly and much too easily, and that the intellectual foundations of it have still to be laid; and, of course, we are told that it is the task of the universities of the world to lay those intellectual foundations.

Just for a few moments let us look at that last proposition.

We can remind ourselves in the beginning that the subject-matter with which we deal in the universities is international. It is all international. Homer, Benedetto Croce, Archimedes, Einstein—none of these is a national figure. They are citizens of the world. But does it follow that the students of this raceless, timeless material are automatically becoming citizens of the world? There are hundreds of universities all through the Americas, North and South. Are the Americas therefore internationally-minded?

Shakespeare is a mind for all time and for all places. But, to be honest with ourselves once again, how much

does a boy, say, in Peru, reading Shakespeare in a Spanish translation make out of it? Well, something perhaps, especially if he is a boy of imagination as well as intelligence, but hardly as much as a boy living in this region of the world, part of the marrow of whose bones is the thought and the very phrasing of Shakespeare, whose ancestors, whether literate or not, have quoted tags from Shakespeare all their lives. Very well then, to be honest once more, just how much does a North American student reading Plato in an English translation make out of Plato? Again something, depending on his imagination as well as his intelligence. But remember there are those who assure us, and who say that they *know*, that no one can understand France at the present time and Frenchmen at the present time, unless he is steeped in Rabelais and Montaigne and Pascal and Descartes and Molière and Voltaire, and all the other makers of modern France. But that is a long study, best begun in childhood and never safely deferred until college days. Oh well, it may be said, not many, of course, can come to know the literatures of Europe and the history of its peoples in that way. That is the point—not many, but some can, and some do. A most excellent illustration was the late Jules Jusserand, the French ambassador to the United States. Of another ambassador to Washington, Viscount Bryce, William James said, "All facts to him are free and equal." *There* were two men steeped in the literatures of the West, ancient and modern, and highly trained as well in science, and highly trained in law, both of them. Those men were capable of an international outlook! Professor Gildersleeve, with the Greek orators in his knapsack through the Civil War, so that he knew them almost by heart when the war was ended—such men as those, such men as many of us know in American chairs, and in

Canadian chairs to-day, are capable of an international outlook; but (and I limit this remark solely to Canada) I think we delude ourselves if we imagine that we are training any large number of those men to-day.

I think that just as we hope for too much, happening too quickly, from such text-books as I have spoken about in the high-schools, so in the universities we have fallen into the way of taking short-cuts; and it is an old saying—it is thousands of years old—that short-cuts lead nowhere. Science, one would think, would give its votaries a broad, tolerant, humble view; and often this is called an age of science. But it is enormously important to say what we mean by "science." Is it an arrogant specialization, unlit and unwarmed by the humaner studies? What would many of our scientists make of the statement: "To think scientifically is to think like a Greek"?

There are distinct signs on this continent of a new breadth of view, and a new tolerance, which perhaps have been generally overlooked. The disinterested interest which American foundations and American universities have taken in a world-wide study of disease, in archæology and other things, has been very striking. They have welcomed to their shores, and made it possible for Canada to welcome, the exiled scholars of more than one country in recent years. The American interest in the Far East cannot be wholly set down to commercial ambition, nor to fear of Japan. Mr. Lattimer's book on Manchuria, and one or two American quarterlies show a refreshing objectiveness in internationalism.

Yet too frequently, and again I limit myself here to the situation in Canada, we confine ourselves, so it seems to many of us, to special fields, to practical ends, to a parochial outlook. How many of our professors of physics or mathematics would venture an opinion as to

why Archimedes stumbled when he was just on the brink of the work of Leibniz or Newton? Was it the accident of the Roman soldier, or was it something else? Or, more particularly, Archimedes having failed, why did no one else take up that torch for another eighteen hundred years? How many of our professors of science will tell us why biology is the first science to fade when civilization begins to crumble, and the last science to become respectable when civilization is again established? Unpractical questions, some will say—metaphysical puzzles. I am not demanding that those or any other questions be answered, of course. I am simply citing them as illustrations of the sort of thing that the commercialized or the materialistic man, whether a professor or not, would never pause over, but which some professors would ponder day and night. A man capable of pondering the first of those questions would be a most profound scholar, unlimited by any sort of nationalism; and the man capable of answering or even weighing the second question would know that science, if it is to be truly served, demands on the part of the individual inquirer endless courage, and, on the part of the society in which the individual works, a tolerance based on generations of freedom. At any rate, not to go into it any further, that is the sort of thing the international mind would play over.

But many in Canada, both in and outside the universities, have been painfully aware that it is not upon that sort of mind, not upon that sort of deep scholarship, not upon that sort of highly trained intelligence that we have been concentrating our efforts. We have become painfully aware that if we are to produce scholars and critics with the international outlook, the universities themselves will have to be considerably changed. For

years now we have known that the universities through trying to carry too many to the goal have not come near the goal, to put it mildly. Some think, by the way, that the depression is the best thing that ever happened to us, although we have groaned and grumbled and really are very much hurt by it. Now, at any rate, in the difficulties at home and in the general uncertainty, we find ourselves forced to brook no further delays in our efforts to produce such minds—scholars and critics and thinkers, versatile, adroit, far-seeing. And, I think, in order to produce these a good many of us in Canada are ready, if necessary, to lighten the ship, if I may change the metaphor—and I am not thinking merely of the number of students. Furthermore we realize that the whole process must begin not in the universities, but low down in the schools. For a generation in Canada we have admitted freely, to ourselves at least, that our schools as compared with the schools of Western Europe are far behind in the results obtained, and now the lack of money, if nothing else, has made a reform of our schools imperative.

As soon as we come to think of education in terms of life (how did the two ever become divorced?), we are reminded that so many things happen, that so many rich strands become interwoven in human experience, without our prevision, without our taking thought. What formula is there for producing a Goethe, or a da Vinci? At once we admit that such demigods are beyond our prediction. But do we not too often assume that their ways and their work are beyond our range? Are there not some boys in Canada who should be brought without ado into the company of these giants, nurtured on Homer instead of Kipling, thrust, without fear of fitness or consequence, into a bracing air? And again, since it is the experience of even common men that no one can by taking thought

be prepared for the rich multifariousness of life, for the depth of its emotions, its awe and wonder, its capacity for all manner of enjoyment in sight and sound and in intellectual exercise, why be so sure in advance that this thing or that is uninteresting, unpractical, or negligible? Why has astronomy become a sealed book to Canadians at large? Why have we, except in very few communities, shut our ears and hearts to the accumulated riches of the world's music?

In conclusion, to prevent possibility of misunderstanding, let us remind ourselves that there will never be found a simple formula to set everything right. Rather it has been part of our experience to realize that life and the world being so difficult, so fascinatingly difficult, education must be correspondingly difficult. On the other hand, we should not be depressed. We have punctured our vanity at many points, we have deflated our complacency, but we still should have a quiet and steady hope, for after all it is with youth that we have to deal, a youth not less eager and splendid we think than the springtime of any generation in the past—a youth, moreover, that is bored to death with the so-called amusements which we older men, partly unwittingly and partly perhaps in our own weariness, have provided for them.

Think of the golden opportunity of the schoolmaster who finds that his pupils are really casting about for something tough enough to chew! There never was such an opportunity since the world began, one sometimes thinks—a youth whose best intelligences are really openly asking that we do not insult them, that we do not trifle with them. If we answer that request—and how can we refuse it?—we may have to give up, to a very large extent, conducting sanatoria for lame ducks, but there is

a good chance of our finding national and international leaders.

And when I say "leaders," I am not thinking at all of university presidents, nor of prime ministers, nor of anyone else who is, conceivably even, in danger of finding himself swallowed up in the routine of—how shall I put it?—keeping pace with public vagaries, not to use too harsh a phrase. I am thinking not at all of pundits with a ready answer to the questions of the day. I am thinking rather of those whose chief eminence is that they are private, independent, unattached; fertile in questions rather than prolific in answers; obstinate and stubborn only in their devotion to principles, ideals, and scepticism; ready and yielding only to promptings of the imagination and to dreams of a sane world.

CANADA'S LEADING POET
STEPHAN G. STEPHANSSON (1853-1927)

WATSON KIRKCONNELL

CANADA is lacking in those literary shrines which an older civilization scatters so lavishly across its countryside. Ayr, Ecclefechan and Abbotsford, Grasmere, Stratford, Stoke Poges, and unnumbered other Old-World villages and towns, are honoured for their ghosts of literary association, an intangible accumulation of the fruitful centuries. When, in an era yet to come, a similar place-worship arises in Canada, a strong claim to recognition will be made by the little Albertan hamlet of Markerville, near which, for almost forty years, lived Stephan G. Stephansson, one of the greatest of all Icelandic poets, and, as an adopted Canadian, an author with an eminent place in our own literary annals.

Stephan Gudmundsson Stephansson was born on October 3, 1853, on a small farm named Kirkjubol, in the parish of Skagafjördur, on the north coast of Iceland. On the side of his father, Gudmundur Stephansson, he was related to the provost of the diocese of Holar, while through his mother, Gudbjörg Hannesdottir, he was cousin to the famous poet Benedikt Gröndal. He was educated in one of the elementary schools of the island, but did not proceed to a grammar school.

In 1873, as a lad of twenty, he emigrated to the United States, first working as a farm-hand near Milwaukee, and later pioneering on his own account in Shawano County, Wisconsin, and, after 1880, in Pembina County, North Dakota. During his Wisconsin period he married an Icelandic bride, Helga Jonsdottir, by whom he had three sons and three daughters. Finally, in 1889, he removed,

with some other Dakotan settlers, to a new pioneering enterprise in Alberta, about eighty miles north of Calgary. At first there was no post-office within seventy miles, but the completion, in 1892, of the Calgary-Edmonton branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway gave them a market-centre at Innisfail, twelve miles distant. Still later, the little village of Markerville, with two stores, a creamery, a town-hall, and a few cottages, grew up about three miles from Stephansson's log-cabin homestead. In a brief poem, "My New Neighbourhood," he describes the region thus:*

> Where the Red Deer River runs
> From the Rockies towards the dawn,
> Through Alberta's bellying hills,
> Basin'd strath and grassy lawn,
>
> Here the herdsmen have their home,
> Haunt the hollows and the spurs;
> Some drive shambling sheep; some, bulls—
> Shameless, green-eyed murmurers.
>
> Hell's retired henchmen here,
> Heaven's lost servants, sullen, slow,
> Lag like Greeks by Lethe stream,
> Letting all commandments go.

With this district he identified himself for the rest of his life. He came to it a man of thirty-six, in the prime of his strength, with a family of little ones about his knees. Here, too, he died on August 10, 1927, a white-haired veteran of seventy-four, with a rich life-record behind him. He was one of the first organizers of the Markerville school-district; he took an active part in every constructive community enterprise; and he contributed

*This and all other quotations in the article are my own English renderings from the original Icelandic. All names of poems and books have been turned from Icelandic into English, in order to accommodate the general reader.

generously out of his poverty in aid of every good cause. He considered himself categorically a Canadian, but in his heart he linked up that allegiance with an unfailing affection for the far-off island of his birth.

As to appearance, he was five feet seven inches in height, slender in build but very rugged and wiry. His eyes were a deep Nordic blue, very lustrous and very piercing, but the black hair of his earlier years indicated that blending of Celtic blood with the Scandinavian which tends to differentiate the typical Icelander from his Norwegian cousin. Stephansson wore a heavy moustache but no beard; his countenance was lean and lined; and wrinkles of good nature lurked at the corners of his eyes and mouth.

Since his claims to greatness rest upon his writings, the remainder of this article will be devoted to a summary of his output and an exposition of its character.

Dated poems of his composition go back to 1868, when he was fifteen years of age. Many of his fugitive poems were published in *Framfari*, the first Icelandic newspaper in North America, issued at Riverton, Manitoba, from 1877 to 1880, and still more in the Winnipeg papers, *Heimskringla* (founded in 1886) and *Lögberg* (founded in 1888). His first volume of verse, *Out in the Open Air*, was published in Reykjavik in 1898, and a second volume, *En Route*, in the same city in 1900. He was immediately hailed as the foremost Icelandic poet in North America, and some thirty-four of his friends and admirers, both in Canada and in the United States, undertook to finance a collected edition of his poetry. This was set up by the Gutenberg Press, Reykjavik, in 1909 and 1910, and appeared in three large volumes, totalling 884 octavo pages. *The Lay of Kolbeinn*, an historical poem on the

theme of a sixteenth-century folk-tale, was issued in Winnipeg in 1914.

By this time, critical opinion in Iceland was unanimous in regarding him as unsurpassed by any other Icelandic poet since the Middle Ages. In 1917, on the joint initiative of the government and the Young People's League, he was invited to Iceland as the guest of the nation. He spent the entire summer in a triumphal progress through all the towns and villages of the island, and was fêted with especial honour in the capital and in his native districts of the North. The poetic outcome of this visit was *Homeward Bound*, published in Reykjavik later in 1917. A strongly pacifistic book of poems, *The Trail of War* (Reykjavik, 1920), lost him many friends at the time, but did not lessen his poetic reputation. In 1923, the Heimskringla Press, Winnipeg, issued two large supplementary volumes of collected poetry, totalling over 600 pages. This, apart from *Ascending the Glacier* (Winnipeg, 1918), a little prose pamphlet of travel reminiscences, and *Motes*, a series of symbolic and speculative sketches in prose, which appeared in *Heimskringla* in the 1890's, constitutes his published output. A formidable amount of posthumous material remains, however, in the hands of his literary executor, Dr. Rögnvaldur Pétursson of Winnipeg, and will be published as commercial circumstances permit. There is enough additional poetry to bring the total of his collected verse to over 2,000 octavo pages; there will be two volumes of letters; and there is a final volume of prose sketches, essays, and short stories.

In sheer bulk of output, no other Canadian poet is comparable to Stephan G. Stephansson. He has published more verse than Bliss Carman, Charles G. D. Roberts, and Wilson MacDonald combined. As for his

quality, the attitude of Icelandic critics, a most dour and jealous fraternity, towards this colonial poet, is itself a striking vindication of his greatness. To be rated every whit as great as Bjarni Thorarensen, Matthias Jochumsson, Jonas Hallgrimsson, Thorsteinn Erlingsson, and Einar Benediktsson, is to occupy a place in modern Scandinavian literature which no Anglo-Canadian yet enjoys in modern English literature.

Stephansson's range is best indicated by a brief analysis of the five volumes of his collected poetry. These volumes were carefully subdivided by him into sections classified according to subject-matter, while the individual poems record in most cases the year of composition.

Volume I, published in 1909, is organized into four parts. The first, *Caught from the Clear Sky*, comprises one hundred lyrics and epigrams, mostly brief deliverances on human life and experience. Some titles are: "The Poet's Art," "Christ and Christian," "Weltmacht," and "The Visitation of Ghosts." The second part, *Out in Windy Weather*, comprises twenty-six longer poems, descriptive of the more boisterous aspects of nature. Among these poems are "Winter," "First Snow," "Season in Alberta," "Easter," "Autumn Mood," and "Thunderstorm." The third part, *Toasts to Land and People*, consists of sixty-one poems, mostly either elaborate odes for Canadian or Icelandic public occasions, or more familiar toasts in verse to individuals. Typical titles are "Toast to Alberta," "Our Mother-tongue," "Icelandic-Canadians," "Skagafjördur," "Toast to Canada," "Toast to Iceland," "The Pioneer's Wife," "Address to the Norsemen." Part four, *At Home*, contains forty-one poems, meditative, intimate, or urbanely conversational in tone, dealing with such varied topics as "Christmas Eve,"

"At Flood-tide," "Last Will and Testament," "Jehovah," and "At Twilight."

The second volume, also published in 1909, falls into three parts. The opening section, *Out in the Open Air*, contains forty-six poems, most of them magnificent specimens of nature poetry, running through the whole gamut of the Canadian scene. Titles include, "The Rockies," "The Flood," "The Prairie Fire," "Summer Evening in Alberta," "A Clearing Sky," "In a Land of Wide Prospect," "Lingering Snow," and "The Northern Lights." The second part, *From Tales and Sagas*, comprises thirty poems on themes from history and literature, chiefly those of the Norse peoples, *e.g.*, "Norna-Gestur," "From Ossian," "The Fire of Surtur," "The Snow-king's Daughter," "The Genie of the Lamp," and "At Stiklestad." In the third part, *Dreamt concerning Coming Events*, there are thirty-two poems, many of them lengthy ruminations on the Boer War, the Dreyfus Affair, and the revolutionary movement in Russia in 1905.

Stephansson's third volume, published in 1910, is subdivided into four sections. The first part, *En Route*, opens with a long narrative poem of 56 pages. This poem, which is probably his greatest single achievement, is made up of vivid glimpses of travel throughout Western Canada. Some of its sub-sections are "Northern Prairie," "The Mining Town," "The Day after the Thaw," "Evening Shadows," "Waggon on the Road," "The Accident," and "Neither Do I Condemn Thee." The same division of the volume also contains thirty-nine shorter poems—lyrics and epigrams. The second part, *Execution of the Revolutionist*, consists of three long poems, "The Czar," "The Champion of Freedom," and "The Prisoner," all centring around a painting by the Russian artist Vereschagin, and philosophizing on the tyranny of the czarist

régime. In the third part, *Moving into the New House*, are thirty-four poems inspired by the family's removal from the original log-cabin on the Markerville farm to a new frame-built farm-house. Some titles are: "Joyful Anticipation," "Village and Market-town," "The Horse Deal," and "Old Trails." The fourth part consists of a single philosophical poem, *The Deaconess*, setting forth his religious ideals of humble life and sacrificial service.

The fourth volume, published in 1923, is arranged in four parts. The first part, *Weathervanes*, consists of twenty-two brief poems, descriptive of nature, *e.g.*, "Snowy Weather," "Warm Wind," "Calm Water," "The Surf," and "Spring Twilight." In the second part, entitled *Year-books*, are grouped together twenty-one poems, miscellaneous in subject-matter, which he had contributed to various Icelandic annuals. The third part, *Stirrup-cups*, contains sixty-eight poems, mostly presented, like the ancient stirrup-cup, to friends who were leaving him after a visit. The concluding section, *Worn Paths* (*i.e.*, "familiar themes"), is very extensive, consisting as it does of one hundred and sixty-one poems of varying lengths and on the most diverse topics: "Old Loves," "New-Year's Night," "Tithes," "The Fashion Magazine," "Concert," "The Sick-bed," "Conscription," and "Smart Dealing."

In the fifth and final volume, published in 1923, there are five main sub-divisions. The opening section, *Saga-tales*, contains twenty poems based on themes from the Icelandic sagas. In the second section, *Long Stays*, are four long poems, narrative and dramatic, *viz.*: "Help on the Cliff," "The Lay of Kolbeinn," "Christmas Blizzard," and "The Hill of Sense." The third division, *The Trail of War*, comprises thirty-eight poems written in condemnation of the waste and misery of war. Among the

titles are: "Ahashuerus," "A Dream of Justice," Armistice," "When Christ was Army-chaplain," and "The Protest of the Unknown Soldier." The fourth part, entitled *Wrestlings*, contains one hundred and ten poems, most of them quite brief, in which he "wrestles" with his critics. The titles are often pungent: "Said the Blind to the Blind," "Police Case and Gospel," "The Land of Learned Men," and "Priestly Politics." In the concluding section, *Homeward Bound*, are forty-two poems inspired by his visit to Iceland in 1917. The titles are largely self-explanatory: "The Eastward Road," "Sea Ice," "Toast to the Ladies," "Thingvellir Ode," and "Reykjavik."

The mind that begot this teeming progeny of verse was largely self-trained. Stephansson received scarcely any education beyond that of the elementary schools in Iceland, but his poetic efforts and his diligent self-instruction in language and literature were continuous from boyhood to old age. He was master of Icelandic, old and modern, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, and English, and saturated himself in the poetries of these languages. He also had a reading knowledge of German. His greatest attention was given to a study of the poetic resources of the Icelandic language, based on a tireless examination of the diction of the Saga period and of the relatively unhandselled dialects of North Iceland. His deliberate building up of a poetic vocabulary that was copious, varied, and sometimes archaic, resembled the practice of Spenser and met with the same sort of criticism from his contemporaries. Against Stephansson, the censure had much more weight, for all-too-often his verses give the impression of weird, sullen masses of frozen granite chiselled by sheer brute force into the semblance of poetry. Much of his work far surpasses

even Browning's last style in obscurity and in lack of singing quality. The Icelandic poet Gudmundur Fridjonsson thus characterizes Stephansson's style in a brief epigram:

> Twain are the tongues that Stephan G.
> Tunes in his lines. One seems to me
> Vague and as void of gainful toil
> As vicious herbs from sour soil.
> Wise the other, with warmth of merit—
> Wine of verse and fire of spirit.

His personal library was that of a scholar. Its main strength lay in two directions: (1) standard works in Scandinavian literature, languages, and history, in the collection of which he was greatly assisted by Hjartar Thordarson, a well-to-do merchant in Chicago, who had been a fellow-immigrant in youth and remained a loyal life-long friend; and (2) general works in philosophy, history, and economics. The Stephansson farm-house was probably unique in Alberta in having a separate room devoted solely to its master's studies and poetic labour. By evening lamp-light in that snug sanctum, after the day's farm tasks were done and he had washed and changed his clothes, he would sit at his table far into the night, blissfully unaware of the passage of time as he wrought with the materials of his poetic art. His beloved books were at his elbow, and all the ages were brought to one imaginative focus of experience as he lived through another instalment of creative exaltation. In the earlier, log-cabin years, however, this studious privacy was not available; and some of his best poems were even composed in the railway construction camps where he sometimes toiled in order to enable the family to survive stark poverty.

In an analysis of Stephansson's poetry, three qualities

emerge: imaginative force, emotional power, and a dominant intellectuality.

The vividness of his imagination and its fertile capacity for invention are most striking in his descriptive poetry. No other Canadian poet in any language presents a comparable picture of Western Canada. The epic of the Western pioneer is built up in a long series of unforgettable pictures, drawn from life by a poet who himself lived through the terrific toil of frontier colonization. But far more important than his first-hand experience was his capacity for interpreting what he saw. Consider, for example, the following description of the first prairie level in Manitoba:

> By prairie and sleugh-side the train that we rode
> Drove ever relentlessly north.
> To our left the great River lay turbid and red
> And sprawled itself sullenly forth.
> Its breast never quickened in rapid or fall.
> Its dull, heavy waters were fain
> To waddle forever with arms full of mud
> And the slummocky clay of the plain.
> But the land itself lay like an infinite board,
> Unslivered, unknotted, and clean,
> As if all of the stuff of Creation were planed
> And stained an ineffable green.

Different, but equally vivid, is the following sketch of an early winter morning in the Foothills:

> At dawn, when we woke, there were blankets enough
> On the couch where we lay in a row,
> For blizzards of midnight upon us had spread
> A foot of soft, eider-down snow;
> While Providence, kind to the simply devout,
> Had buried the Irishman deep,
> And drifted above him with evident care
> The warmth of the mightiest heap.

But the air was as bitter as death, while the sun
  Rose slowly with shivering ire;
The cold scorched our throats, it was flame to our flesh,
  And burned in our lungs like a fire.
The bluish-white tide of the snow had engulfed
  Each hillock and hollow as well,
And the frost-haggard trees were like pallid gray ghosts
  From the pale frozen forests of hell.
On the western horizon, dim billows of night
  Ebbed still in cold surges of gray;
The sky leaned and clung to the glacial earth
  As if frozen at last to its clay;
And a dark shadow-mouth in the firmament gaped
  So swart in the calm, cloudless height
That a black door seemed opening, far up in space,
  Upon darkness, blank nothing, and night.

Some of his most arresting effects are gained by evoking the conceptions of Old Norse mythology, as in the following comparison of a train crossing the prairies at midnight to the mythological Doomship on which the forces of hell sail the abyss to attack Asgard at the catastrophic end of time:

On through the vastness and darkness the train
  Kept ever its shadowy way,
With no halt in the heat of its thunderous haste,
  No hesitant falter or stay. . . .
But the prairie flowed by like an ebony sea
  Of boundless and billowless black,
Where our train, a long Doomship with belly of fire,
  Sought Asgard with death in its track.

The foregoing extracts from *En Route* give some hint, even in translation, of his imaginative force. His potency of emotion is likewise notable. Sometimes it is the heat of indignation made incandescent by the constraining limits of a four-line Icelandic epigram. Such a quatrain-poem, comparable to the Persian *rubai* or the Greek

epigram in its compression, is his savage outburst, "In War-time:"

> In Europe's reeking slaughter-pen
> They mince the flesh of murdered men,
> While swinish merchants, snout in trough,
> Drink all the bloody profits off!

More typical of Stephansson is his warmth of affection for his many friends and for the two countries, Canada and Iceland. The Icelanders of Western Canada celebrate the second of August each year as a national holiday, reaching its climax of festivity in toasts, both in prose and in verse, to Canada and to Iceland. It is an occasion comparable to the Welsh *eisteddfod*, and poets vie with one another in their eloquent odes. In this *genre*, Stephansson, who was deeply devoted to both countries, was *facile princeps*, and made a profound impression during visits to the Icelandic communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. His tribute to Iceland in the following lines, for example, is the most widely known Icelandic poem yet written in Canada:

REMEMBRANCE

> Though you have trodden in travel
> All the wide tracts of the earth,
> Bear yet the dreams of your bosom
> Back to the land of your birth,
> Kin of volcano and floe-sea!
> Cousin of geyser and steep!
> Daughter of downland and moorland!
> Son of the reef and the deep!
>
> High over heaven and landscape,
> Haunting your thought as it strays,
> Torrents and towering summits
> Tremble once more to your gaze.
> Far in the outermost ocean

The isle of your heart is awake,
Shining in shadowless summer,
Showered with light for your sake.

Vivid that Icelandic vision
Viewed in your dreams as they run—
Granite rocks growing with flowers,
Glaciers warm in the sun,
O kin of volcano and floe-sea,
Cousin of geyser and steep,
Daughter of downland and moorland,
Son of the reef and the deep.

On the other hand, he can be equally moving in his love for Canada, as in the following "Toast to Alberta:"

Ah, holy in the hills' embrace,
  Our hardy foster-mother!—
The sunrise seals thy bosom's grace
  As seemly as That Other;
With running rivers, silver-clear,
  With radiant peak and prairie,
And green, high spruce-slopes groping sheer
  To the glittering ice-crag's eyry.

Thy glorious valleys widen down
  Through straths and shining passes,
By shelter-belts of forest brown
  And hollows warm with grasses,
To a mighty plain of green, that wakes
  In a wind that laughs and quivers,
Fringed with a hundred azure lakes,
  Embroidered bright with rivers.

Here veils of Northern Light are drawn
  On high as winter closes,
And hoary dews at summer dawn
  Adorn the wild red roses.
Sometimes the swelling clouds of rain
  Repress the sun's caresses;
But soon the mountains smile again
  And shake their icy tresses.

Young mother, like thy circling hills,
  Watch ever, free and tender,
Over an exiled life that thrills
  A foster-love to render;
But let thy mountain-guards advance,
  Let ice like steel assure thee
Against the rich man's arrogance
  And poverty's pale fury.

Only on the erotic side do his emotions seem deficient. In all of Stephansson's extensive work, real love-poetry is virtually unknown, and one searches his lines in vain for evidences of the quickening impulse of its passion. Dominating all other qualities in Stephansson's poetry is a vigorous masculine intellectuality. He was one who believed with Dante that "poetry and the language proper for it are an elaborate and painful toil;" and his conscious aim was objectivity and perfection of form. Sentiment and emotion rarely threatened the supremacy of the brain that planned and executed the work of art. Indeed, his worst temptation was the more intellectual one of interrupting his poem, in Chaucer's vein, to utter a sly jest and then "torne to his tale agayn." A good instance is to be found in the foregoing description of a winter morning in the Foothills, where he pauses to remark that Providence had rewarded the Irishman's piety with an extra blanket of snow.

Towards sentimentality of any kind, he was remorseless. When, after the War, tributes to the Unknown Soldier became, as he felt, a sort of sentimental fad with one country after another, he wrote a stinging poem, "The Protest of the Unknown Soldier," in which these lines appear:

In Paris was my burial Number One;
My Second was in London; and now vex'd
By vaunting hands, I'm lugg'd to Washington.
—Where next, O Lord, where next?

While hostile towards intemperate emotion, Stephansson was tolerant towards the ideas of others. He himself, especially in youth, was a radical in economics and a Unitarian in religion. While rationalistic in his philosophy, however, he was yet nothing of the agitator or the doctrinaire, and as he grew older he became more and more notable for his genial tolerance towards men and opinions. In the perspective of eternity, the minor arguments dividing mankind seemed scarcely worth a frown.

His intellectuality manifested itself last of all in his mastery of the great literary tradition of the North. Of the Mediterranean, or Graeco-Roman, tradition, he knew nothing at first hand; but his mind was steeped in all of the surviving literature, mythology, and history of the Norse past. That fact makes a full appreciation of his achievement impossible to those not similarly familiar with the legacy of Scandinavia, and will always be an obstacle to recognition by the English or French Canadian. His most vivid allusions and figures appeal to deaf ears and unseeing eyes. Absolutely considered, however, his breadth of literary knowledge, his historical sense, and his philosophical wisdom, all give him an assured place in modern Scandinavian literature and a permanent claim on the regard of Canadians. Comparative valuation may be premature and unprofitable, but it is quite possible that he will some day be acknowledged as the earliest poet of the first rank, writing in any language, to emerge in the national life of Canada.

REVIEWS

"FOR THE PEOPLE"[1]

H. A. Innis

That "insidious and crafty animal vulgarly called a statesman or politician"—the description is Adam Smith's—knows the necessity of appearing intellectual if he is to capture votes. This fact has already been noticed in the Quarterly (for April, 1934) in a review of lectures delivered to political summer schools. As the federal election approached, this necessity became more urgent, and an appeal to books was sustained. Commenting in parliament on Mr. Bennett's programme as outlined in the radio-broadcast of January (1935), Mr. King retaliated by a recital of his own long and sustained activity in the interests of social legislation, and indicated that he had even written a book on the subject. Members of the government and the press tried to turn this fact to his disadvantage by implying that anyone who had written a book was discredited from further participation in governmental activities (even the Liberals were worried); but Mr. Bennett, unwilling to join the attempt to discredit intellectual interest as evinced in books, stated that he himself had read, and been influenced by, Mr. Bready's on *Lord Shaftesbury*.

We know, however, that Mr. Bennett was directly concerned with, and far more deeply influenced by, the production of a book which was destined to have far-reaching effects on political life in Canada, namely, the *Report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads*. Even more than Mr. Bennett, Mr. Stevens had been concerned with

[1] *Report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads*, Ottawa, King's Printer.

Lord Shaftesbury and Social-industrial Progress, by J. Wesley Bready, with an introduction by Sir Josiah Stamp, Allen and Unwin.

Industry and Humanity: A Study in the Principles underlying Industrial Reconstruction, by the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, new ed., Macmillan Company of Canada.

Social Credit Manual: Social Credit as applied to the Province of Alberta, by Wm. Aberhart, Calgary.

Social Planning for Canada, by the Research Committee of the League for Social Reconstruction, Thomas Nelson and Sons.

Steel of Empire: The Romantic History of the Canadian Pacific, by J. M. Gibbon, McClelland and Stewart.

the initiation of the work, with its progress, and with the publicity involved. The volume had but slight interest for the general public, and the ensuing legislation came too late to be of political assistance; but the significance of extensive publicity over a long period was sufficient to evoke and support Mr. Bennett's own programme, to warrant general agreement with the legislation on the part of Mr. King, to lead Mr. Stevens to form an additional party, to encourage a provincial party led by Mr. Aberhart, to strengthen the Communist party, and to steal the scant clothing of the loosely-knit organization associated with Mr. Woodsworth. No bolder attempt than the price-spreads investigation has ever been made to repair the political damage of a sustained depression.

The intense political activity which characterized the federal election has been an inevitable result of the depression. But an older and very interesting political document from an intellectual point of view (though of least political effectiveness, as seen in the haste and determination with which all parties dissociated themselves from it), the *Communist Manifesto*, has an illuminating comment: "In every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which it is built up and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch." Certainly much light is thrown on the intellectual state of Canada by some of the volumes under review.

A re-reading of Mr. King's book and a survey of his work since its publication suggest a consistency in outlook which is impressive. A student of the social sciences with academic distinction, he has been actively engaged in the field of social legislation since the late nineties. His contributions include the establishment of the Department of Labour, his work as deputy minister and as minister, his development of technique in conciliation in the United States, and the legislation attributable to him as prime minister. These are a testimony to industry and administrative capacity of a high order. His record of work in the federal field is difficult to match. It has coincided almost exactly with the period of expansion which began in the latter years of the nineteenth century and ended in 1929. His long training in parliament and in the political arena has given him a mastery of parliamentary strategy and of political tactics. Against almost overwhelming odds he dominated the decade of the twenties. Party irregularities, conflict with old-line

party-leaders and regional representatives, with its inevitable accompaniment of weak appointments, were probably a result of circumstances rather than of personal defects which have been attributed to academic exclusiveness. His political philosophy, outlined in his *Industry and Humanity*, has striking similarities to that of the Price-spreads Report and *Social Planning for Canada*, and dissimilarities to that of the members of his own party who subscribe to *laissez-faire*. But, as might be expected, there is in his book little appreciation of economic complexities which have, for the most part, emerged in a period of depression coinciding with a relative decline of natural resources. He belongs to an old and important school of economics, whose precepts Canadians can never neglect, and not to the new school faced with modern complexities.

Mr. Bennett has emerged from a similar background in time, but his training in the Maritimes, and his concern with business, law, and politics, in the rough school of Western Canada, have strengthened his forcefulness and accentuated his courage and decisiveness. He vigorously met the problems of the depression as they arose, and commanded—or should have commanded—universal admiration and respect. His dominating personality, which contrasted with the weakness of his cabinet, enabled him to procure the ablest men available for the numerous commissions and boards which were a feature of his *régime*. The haste with which much of the work was done, the urgent character of the political situation, and the weak position of the social sciences in Canada (with consequent reliance on men brought in from outside), will necessitate material revision. But the years of Mr. Bennett's *régime* will stand out as the turning point of the century in the history of Canadian legislation. As would be expected, the outstanding contribution to the economic literature of the depression in Canada is to be found in the Price-spreads Report. But even here the enormous body of evidence, together with political exigences, prevented an elaborate and thorough analysis of economic problems in Canada during a depression. Mr. Bennett's reference to Lord Shaftesbury suggests a broader philosophy of evangelical bourgeois meliorism, which Halévy, Clapham, and others regard as a basic factor in the social legislation of the nineteenth century, but even this was probably incidental to his task of meeting the problem of the moment. The prestige, wealth, and discipline of the Conservative party provided strong support to his herculean

efforts, but even this support has shown signs of strain. An immediate task of the party is to repair the damages by reorganization and by the encouragement of younger men.

Mr. Stevens, as a product of the Pacific frontier and the political instability of that area, has found discipline irritating. Throughout his career industry and initiative have carried him through numerous investigations and have enabled him to capture ground which other characteristics have prevented him from holding and consolidating. Nevertheless, as the centre of interest in the last two sessions of parliament, as a man with intimate knowledge of the problems he attacks, and with evangelical fervour and executive capacity, Mr. Stevens succeeded in developing an organization on a national scale, supported by obvious wealth and influence and votes.

Mr. Aberhart worked with greater effectiveness in a narrower region and an environment better adapted to new parties. This region, by virtue of location, has been subjected to sharp fluctuations in income, has felt more acutely the problems of freight rates, debts, and drought, and has been less subject to the steadying effects of strong metropolitan growth. It deserted the old parties in the depression after the War, and it substituted loyalty to individuals for loyalty to parties. Consequent instability followed the declining influence of Henry Wise Wood through age, and of other leaders through attacks on personal conduct. Individuals who have broken relations with parties are compelled to rely on new policies, and the United Farmers of Alberta flirted in turn with left-wing Labour elements, and with monetary schools. Mr. Aberhart emerged as an individual who capitalized the radio and built up religious enthusiasm to repair the losses of established ecclesiastical organizations after church-union. Then, turning to politics, he secured an overwhelming victory by skilful political strategy, particularly in his choice of candidates and use of literature.

His small low-priced manual, supported by numerous advertisements, represents an attempt to modify theories worked out by Major Douglas and other engineers who have become interested in monetary problems. The general arguments emphasize the dangers of the centralization of wealth (as evident in debts), the vital importance of inventions, and the plenty-scarcity paradox referred to as the problem of distribution. The engineer has had a dominant influence in the history of capital equipment in Canada: he has

planned for, and committed governments to, enormous expenditures in canals, railways, elevators, and the large-scale type of capital equipment which characterized the Canadian structure. The pressure of modern industrialism in iron and steel, gasoline, and electricity, has been evident in government ownership of railways, roads, and power-plants, and in governmental intervention in housing and armaments. The inevitable clash between the engineer and the financier has been described in detail elsewhere, and it will be sufficient here to deal with Mr. Aberhart's philosophy as part of a general struggle which has become increasingly acute during the depression, and which, in the main, has involved advances on the part of the engineer in the form of numerous monetary devices. In a sense Mr. Aberhart is right in suggesting that economists do not understand social credit. Nor does Mr. Aberhart. But the protest can be understood. The old parties, the U.F.A., the bankers, and the Socialists, united in opposition, were swept to defeat.

Mr. Aberhart owes much in Alberta, in Saskatchewan, and possibly in British Columbia, to the groundwork prepared by the new parties which capitalized the evidence of the Price-spreads Report and assiduously broke down loyalties to the old parties. Moreover, Alberta is a province on the height of land of Canadian trade from the East and the West, and has been more closely associated with the Pacific coast. Its political and economic structures have been more closely united, and with dependence on individuals the possibility of migration upwards from rural areas, and from the younger generation, has been less conspicuous than in other areas, with the result that political revolutions are more pronounced.

The particular types of appeal which will influence "the exploited and downtrodden masses" in the rural areas apparently differ vastly from those which characterize "the pecuniary industrial culture pattern" if the volume on *Social Planning for Canada* is an indication. The size, weight, price, and lack of paid advertising, present a striking contrast to Mr. Aberhart's manual. The academic gloss is more conspicuous, but the absence of self-confidence is possibly less effectively concealed. Ostensibly outlining the Socialist point of view, it has fundamentally the philosophy of Mr. King and the Price-spreads Report. There is a significant omission of reference to works on socialism such as G. Myers, *History of Canadian Wealth* (Chicago, 1914).

Social Planning for Canada is obviously intended to influence

the more opulent middle class with its pecuniary concern in prestige-values. To quote the *Communist Manifesto* once more, "to this section belong economists, philanthropists, improvers of the condition of the work class, organizers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to dumb animals, temperance fanatics, hole-and-corner reformers of every imaginable kind." The present reviewer is not competent to judge as to the effectual character of this type of appeal to this class; but he cannot refrain from referring to the kindly, well-meaning interest of a large group (more than twenty) who have been concerned in restoring clothes which had been snatched by old and new parties, and in searching for further supplies by rummaging through the baskets not only of Canada, but also of numerous classes and countries, to cover nakedness exposed to the cold blasts of the depression in Canada. It would be ungracious and grossly unfair to ask why extremely valuable pieces of homespun clothing had been left behind, or to raise questions of any kind. To an economist the ways of politicians are past finding out. The result may not appeal to fastidious tastes, and careful scrutiny will show many ill-fitting pieces, many pieces designed for one purpose and used for another, and many ill-secured pieces, which will certainly fall off if the subject moves about unduly or if the winds blow. The tailors have not agreed as to the design; but they have been apprenticed in London and Oxford, and it may appeal to more exclusive tastes insistent on imported styles. An attempt is made to assert self-confidence and self-assurance by insistence on the "intellectual" (quotation marks Mr. Woodsworth's) approach, but apparently there were sufficient intellectuals involved to defeat this object. The insistence "that we are not just another political party" is defeated by the presence of innumerable political devices, such as the *cliché* "that statistics absolutely prove," and a constant application of the principle *suggestio falsi, suppressio veri.* Artistic effects have not been neglected and will strike many as the most significant feature of the work. To change the metaphor, theme-songs run through the volume: "The capitalist system is breaking up" (to the tune of "London bridge is falling down"); "The Big Bad Wolf of St. James Street" (with some reference also to the nicer wolf who is chancellor of McGill University; for these "wolves," it would seem, are largely responsible for this nasty depression); and "Sectionalism, the curse of the Canadian economy, shall not prevail" (to the tune of "Curfew

must not ring to-night"). It would be quite unfair, and out of place here, to subject the most pretentious of these political documents to detailed examination in the light of those standards accepted by students of economics. The concern of this review is limited to the effects of the depression on economic intelligence in Canada, and the reasons for its evident decline.

In the art of propaganda political parties have much to learn from, and some things to avoid in, the publicity work of the Canadian Pacific Railway, particularly as evinced in *Steel of Empire*, a volume from the skilled hand of its director of publicity. Numerous photographs, reproductions of cartoons, maps, and paintings, together with the general attractiveness, interest, and information of the book, carry one through its theme of the place of the railway as a culmination of the quest for a North-west Passage, to the inevitable conclusion that amalgamation under the Beatty plan is the end towards which the whole creation should move. And this it does with a skill and effectiveness certainly absent from the effort of *Social Planning for Canada* to lead by a huge compilation of material to its much vaguer conclusion. But *Steel of Empire* constitutes further proof that it is more difficult to keep the C.P.R. out of politics than to keep politics out of the C.N.R. And the convincing logic of the book tends to defeat its own end. For no people will knowingly submit itself to such perpetual and efficient propaganda as would apparently reign if the Beatty plan were adopted!

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A reading of the volumes under review raises searching questions as to the position of the social sciences in Canada during the depression. The very small proportion of valid economic thinking which has been associated with recent political activities is offset by important work in the social sciences, such as that being published in the "Canadian Frontiers of Settlement" series, the Canadian-American Relations project, and the McGill Social Research series, and that done by numerous unsubsidized individuals. But allowing for this work, the abysmal ignorance of the economic structure in Canada, with the accompanying volume of political talk, suggests that we are still suffering grievously from the loss of large numbers of able men during the War. In a lecture to the London School of Economics, Professor Pigou indicated difficulties in England, which are much more acute in Canada:

To a young man the ambition to play a part in great affairs is natural: and the temptation to make slight adjustments in his economic view so that it shall conform to the policy of one political party or another, may be severe. As a Conservative economist or a Liberal economist or a Labour economist he has much more chance of standing near the centre of action than he has as an economist without adjectives. But for the student to yield to that temptation is an intellectual crime. It is to sell his birthright in the household of truth for a mess of political pottage. He should rather write up for himself and bear always in mind Marshall's weighty words: "Students of social science must fear popular approval; evil is with them when all men speak well of them. If there is any set of opinions by the advocacy of which a newspaper can increase its sales, then the student . . . is bound to dwell on the limitations and defects and errors, if any, in that set of opinions, and never to advocate them unconditionally even in an *ad hoc* discussion. It is almost impossible for a student to be a true patriot and to have the reputation for being one at the same time."[2]

Professor Pigou would have noted that in a new country in which the rewards of scholarship are small and without prestige, in which intellectual strength has been weakened by the War and by losses to other countries, and in which economic activity is subject to wide fluctuations as a result of dependence on raw materials for export, foot-loose adventurers in universities turn in some cases to business and its profits during booms, and in others to political activity and popular acclaim during depressions.

Universities, unable to provide for the protection of social scientists through lack of traditions of, or respect for, scholarship, have been forced to compromise and have reflected the stress of economic pressure in Canada during the depression. Particularly in the newer universities the construction of buildings, during a boom period, and the installation of equipment incidental to the emphasis laid on industrial, or agricultural, and professional activity, have been accompanied, in the following depression, by inflexible charges of maintenance, operation, and interest, to the detriment of more intangible assets such as libraries and staff. Universities have been further weakened by the loss of abler members of the staff, through competition and through the necessity of participation in political activity directly and indirectly, to secure adequate support. In both old and new universities, administrations have increasingly competed for financial support and staffs. Extension-courses follow their usual trend during depression and have expanded as a means of bringing the universities to the public and

[2]A. C. Pigou, *Economics in Practice*, London, 1935.

strengthening their political position. Misguided attempts to offset decline in prestige[3] have been evident in the importation of university presidents from abroad, and in efforts to prevent dismissals of members of the faculty, even in cases of obvious incompetence. There is sufficient truth in the statement that it is impossible to leave a Canadian university except by death or resignation, to evoke general recognition of its accuracy. Incompetence, erratic behaviour (often confused with brilliance), external activities, even to the point of writing party-platforms and bank-letters—nothing will avail. Distrust and suspicion are inevitable with the breakdown of morale and the spread of politics. Universities can survive only by the principle, *united we fall, divided we stand*; but the necessities of politics require union rather than division.

Outside the universities and schools, the depression has also brought into prominence weaknesses in our cultural life. The attractions of the state in politics have increased with the lowering in prestige of our universities, the declining power of our ecclesiastical bodies, and the weakened state of our business organizations. The severity of the depression on the last-named has involved reduced salaries and payrolls and an inability to absorb able and energetic young men. Decline in business morale has accompanied decline in morale in other institutions, as the evidence leading to the Price-spreads Report has shown. The low cultural level of Canadian business, conspicuous in speeches, architecture, the standard of living, and in an inconceivable narrowness of outlook, together with the relative inability of the large corporate organization characteristic of transcontinental development, to meet problems of adjustment during periods of depression—these have not been things pleasant to contemplate.

Disappearance of loyalties to groups and associations has accompanied the weakened position of individuals during the depression. The law loses respect, and prophets reign in the land. Geographic handicaps have been suggested by Dennis Ireland: "I am oppressed by the atmosphere of provinciality which hangs over Canada like a cloud—due, I suppose, to the fact that there are

[3]How far can professorial demands for an "academic freedom" which has little basis in the needs of scholarship (not freedom to teach your subject, but freedom to carry on propaganda for your own opinions) be described as one more attempt to develop and support prestige? And local readers will not forget the heroic gesture of Toronto's "sixty-eight."

so few Canadians to people this enormous country."[4] Elections in a depression are not conducive to high standards in the discussion of the complex problems of the social sciences in volumes written for political purposes. New catch-calls suited to new conditions, such as an appeal to youth, or an exploiting of "justice and equity," are not indications of profound thought. Nor are the pleas of academicians for more education, more ethics, more philosophy, or more economics, of striking significance. The confusion of volubility with intellectual interest, and of symptoms with cures, are reflections of the fundamental effects of the depression. That the intelligentzia begin to think they are thinking because of what the intelligentzia thought they thought somewhere else; that they refuse to conform to standards of workmanship; that they discuss planning with the vehemence of those who are opposed to planning—these things may be signs of the break-up of Capitalism. But we are told that they are the signs of the *existence* of Capitalism. Even the case for Communism, and the logic and vigour with which it has been advanced, become for some observers a further symbol of the break-up of Capitalism or, paradoxically, of its continuation. But of more significance is the sign they give of the possibility of an intellectual approach, without which no modern civilization can survive. Marx contributed much in building the ladder to escape from his enemies, his followers, and himself. Meanwhile the people ask for bread and are showered with books.

[4]In *Life and Letters*, April, 1935.

TWO STUDIES OF PLATO*

R. D. Maclennan

Great as is the influence of Plato's thought on contemporary philosophy, it is almost safe to predict that the future will see it greater still, if only for the reason that the critical study of the text by Platonic scholars has enabled us to read his dialogues in a fairly

*_The Argument of Plato_, by F. H. Anderson, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Toronto, J. M. Dent and Sons.

Plato's Thought, by G. M. A. Grube, Professor of Classics in Trinity College, Toronto, Methuen and Company.

generally accepted chronological order. It is now possible to approach the study of his writings with the feeling that we are following the development of his own thought; but even so, the student of Plato soon finds that he has embarked upon an almost baffling pursuit. He finds no systematic or exhaustive discussion of special topics; seldom if ever is a positive conclusion reached. Plato himself professes simply to report, and his reporting consists in following the conversation wherever it leads. Yet it remains true of any great philosopher's genius, and especially is it true of one whose peculiar genius it was to be both poet and philosopher, that there is no way of coming to any appreciation of it save through the intimate study of his writings. The present studies, by two members of the staff of the University of Toronto, are in no way substitutes for the reading of Plato, but they are valuable, and, in some sense, complementary aids to the fuller appreciation of his philosophy.

Mr. Anderson's book represents an attempt to knit together certain strands of thought which he finds running throughout Plato's writings, and which, when followed consistently, culminate in a philosophy of life—hence the choice of his title, *The Argument of Plato*. Mr. Grube undertakes a larger and, perhaps, more critical task, of keeping relatively distinct the main threads with a view to providing the reader with an exposition of Plato's teaching on the fundamental problems of life severally considered. It may be said that in essaying this difficult task he has also been able to show that a single pattern of thought pervades the whole.

The first four chapters of Mr. Anderson's book give us a picture of public life in the Athens in which Socrates taught and Plato wrote. Mr. Anderson writes with all the enthusiasm of a genuine disciple, and if there is, perhaps, rather more poetry and paradox than "argument" in these preliminary chapters, he succeeds in conveying an extraordinarily vivid picture of the inter-play of spiritual forces, art, religion, morals, the clash of human interests, and the inevitable confusion of life which results where there is no clear and ruling conception of human good. Such was the society which condemned Socrates and by its condemnation seemed to have embraced the causes of ignorance and obscurantism as represented by the democratic leader and the popular teacher. This preliminary survey brings to light one fact of great importance for the proper understanding of Plato's teaching: philosophy itself

must become a way of life. From first to last Plato's abiding interest will be centred in human life and human good.

Chapter v, therefore, initiates Plato's doctrine of the Multiple Soul, and this discussion is maintained till chapter xi, which deals with the essential motion of the Soul. Within the space of these seven chapters Mr. Anderson preserves a continuity of treatment, beginning with the natural capacities of the self and leading to the view that "virtue is normal human functioning." But this definition of virtue has yet to be explained and completed in terms of our knowledge of the Spiritual Reality which Plato calls The Good. Thus, the final chapter of his book on "The Good Life: Knowledge and Pleasure," brings us back to the theme of human virtue. What the author is concerned to show in the above seven chapters is the consistent manner in which Plato builds his theory of education upon his psychology. "The soul, as we shall see presently [in ch. xi], is essentially a living, moving, creating thing. It acts because it cannot do otherwise. Its education is not the addition of something from without, but the elicitation of what is already contained therein." One may be disposed at times to question whether a more critical treatment of Plato's views on education might not lead us to modify this estimate. Who, for instance, in reading the *Meno* can long remain convinced that Socrates' careful prompting of the very intelligent slave-boy in the properties of the triangle is really "an elicitation of what is already contained" in his mind? And in the higher stages of education in philosophic virtue, we seem to find Plato giving more and more emphasis to the non-natural factors in knowledge. The Form of the Good in the author's own words is "the creator of rational virtue—the cause and end of intelligence . . . because it is the object of reason whose capacities it quickens."

Two excellent and original chapters on music and musical criticism follow. Mr. Anderson's defence of Plato's censorship of the arts is quite admirable; it is also the more convincing in that one is made to feel the writer's own sensitive appreciation of music and literature.

Less satisfactory, because only too brief, is his handling of the major philosophical issues in the last four chapters. Chapter xvi on "The Nature of the Intelligible World," is perhaps the most important, as well as the most difficult, chapter, and one would really welcome a more complete exposition of the problem of the

relation between the Forms and sensuous experience, and some further justification for the conclusion which is drawn from *Philebus* 24a-25e, that "sense and reason, particular and 'form,' logical essences and the data of human experience, are brought together in an activity which is knowledge;" and again of the statement that "motion which is to be understood as logical *otherness*, must be interpreted within an intelligible and interrelated cosmos." In the same connection Mr. Anderson's discussion of the argument of the *Timaeus* is all too brief to support the view towards which he is leading the "argument," that the causality of "mind" in the cosmos is logical and not dynamic or creative. I do not feel at all convinced that this is what Plato's own argument amounts to.

The last chapter on "The Good Life" is a final establishment of the place and meaning of wisdom in human life. There we see that it is not knowledge alone, nor pleasure, which constitutes the good of human life, nor even both together, for mind and wisdom are above both. "The constituents of the good life are, then, first of all, 'measure;' secondly, 'proportion' or logical commensurability, next 'mind and wisdom;' then 'sciences and arts and true opinions;' and lastly, 'the genuine pleasures of the soul.' "

What perhaps impresses the reader of this very interesting book most of all, is the extremely felicitous and skilful manner in which the writer has worked in his references to the Platonic Dialogues. Everywhere possible he makes Plato speak for himself, yet preserves withal continuity of argument and vividness of style. Sometimes, indeed, he tends to overdo the use of the dramatic present tense. Mr. Anderson is clearly a lover of Plato, and any student of that philosopher will find the book instructive in its distinctive presentation of his thought. It is only to be regretted that in chapters where more controversial positions are taken up, the author's treatment stops short of being fully expository or critical. But it is everywhere stimulating.

Mr. Grube's book is likely to be an important contribution to Platonic studies. The method of exposition adopted is a novel one, and on first impression, to those acquainted with the diversity and richness of Plato's thought, unlikely to be successful. The more credit is due to the author for having carried out his task so well. Eight topics are taken up in turn, each forming the subject of a chapter in the following order: the Theory of Ideas, Pleasure, Eros, the Soul, the Gods, Art, Education, Statecraft. The difficulty

involved in following this method of exposition is to keep the topics distinct and yet together. If the difficulty can be overcome, as I think Mr. Grube has shown it can, the result is an exceedingly useful commentary for the student and a quite distinctive presentation of Plato's philosophy.

Recognizing that the philosophical background of Plato's own discussions—at least of his more mature discussions—of every important aspect of human life is the Theory of Forms, and that this is the single pervading pattern of thought which runs throughout his philosophy, the author places the theory first in the order of discussion. In Mr. Grube's words "[the Forms] remain, until the very end of Plato's life, the fundamental hypothesis on which he bases the rest of his philosophy, in spite of the fact that he was well aware of the difficulties which the theory implied. To make completely valid knowledge possible it was essential that there be some such universal realities not subject to change and decay, and that these should be apprehended by the human intelligence." Following Mr. Grube further, we find that the difficulty which Plato never solved was that of the relation between the intelligible world of Forms and the temporal process. Every student of Plato is, of course, aware of this persisting problem; yet not everyone will agree with what the author appears to imply, that the "world of sense" remains in Plato's thought till the end only the reflection of the timeless reality. The point is of first importance for Mr. Grube's own interpretation of Plato's teaching on the nature of human personality and personal immortality, and on the whole problem of the relation between God and the Forms and between God and the temporal world. I trust I do the author no injustice in pointing out in this connection that there is a certain recurring confusion in his terminology where logical and causal relations are discussed. Thus in his summary of Plato's doctrine we are told: "The Ideas (or Forms) are the objective realities that general terms connote. It is from this aspect that Plato thought of them as mathematical formulæ which governed the *physical* world and brought order out of chaos." But mere mathematical formulæ cannot, of course, govern a physical world. Then, on the following page, we are again told that "to regard them merely as logical entities and rules of thought is to deprive Platonism of all its inspiration and emotional appeal."

I can but indicate briefly one or two of Mr. Grube's more

important conclusions on different topics. The discussion of pleasure is excellent; but can we admit the view expressed, that while it is the Good that really matters and the Good is not pleasure but wisdom, yet Plato "came to accept Hedonism as a natural way of life for the average man," and that for the majority who cannot attain to the vision of the Good and organize their lives according to the pattern of goodness, "the hedonistic calculus is the sound and reasonable view of life"? The reader must be referred to the passage cited from the *Laws* (732e). The passage is too long to quote here and cannot be summarized. But does it amount to anything more than Plato's recognition of the need that people be given such guidance as will enable them to discern where "the genuine pleasures of the soul" are to be found? While we agree with Mr. Grube that Plato's ascetic attitude to the pleasure-seeking life, so prominent in the *Phaedo*, is much modified in the later Dialogues, he cannot surely be accused of such flagrant inconsistency as to reject Hedonism as a logically incoherent principle of human virtue and not to do it wholesale. Once pleasure is subordinated to good, it ceases to be a measure of value, of its own no less than of other values. If Plato's theory of education means anything, it must mean that the good for man is made in a "measure" accessible to the average man as well as to the philosopher. And this more reasonable view is recognized by the author himself, when he remarks on another passage from the *Laws* (689e) that "some accomplished people are further removed from it [the supreme wisdom] than rustics who are willing to follow their betters."

Mr. Grube follows Ritter's chronology of the Dialogues with two important exceptions: he places the *Protagoras* later than the *Gorgias*, and the *Symposium* later than the *Phaedo*. I cannot discover any special justification for this procedure, but am concerned only to point out that the placing of the *Phaedo* earlier has an important bearing upon the view which Mr. Grube adopts regarding Plato's teaching on personal immortality. If Plato is trying to find demonstration for the hypothesis of personal immortality in the *Phaedo*, then it may be argued that in the *Symposium* and *Republic* he is gradually moving away from a doctrine of strict personal immortality. For in the meantime he has worked out his psychology of the "multiple soul." The soul itself is a compound; it is a creature of sensuous desire as well as of reason. If there be survival, it can be only a "dismembered personality" that survives.

What persists will be the intellectual part whose identity is with the universal. So Mr. Grube concludes:

> As for immortality, the human soul as a whole definitely does not attain it, since part of it is unequivocally stated to be mortal; neither physical desire nor ambition survives. So that human personality as we know it ceases to be at death. It is however said with equal clearness from the *Phaedo* to the *Timaeus* that the highest part of the soul, the mind or intellect, the capacity to apprehend universal truth does survive. . . . If we ask, further, how far this immortal mind keeps its individuality we must remember that from first to last the aim of the Platonic philosopher is to live on the universal plane, to *lose himself* more and more in the contemplation of truth, so that the perfect psyche would, it seems, lose itself completely in the universal mind, the world-psyche. Hence it remains individual only in so far as it is imperfect, and personal immortality is not something to aim at, but something to outgrow.

Whether Plato had a conception of personal immortality is a controversial point. I can only indicate where, as it seems to me, Mr. Grube's discussion of the problem is faulty. Even should it be granted that the *Phaedo* is an earlier dialogue, yet his initial statement of the philosophical problem is one that few modern philosophers would allow. Thus "where Socrates argues at length that the soul is immortal, a modern thinker would rather argue for its existence and consider immortality to belong to it by definition." No modern thinker would thus argue unless he were a Cartesian, and one cannot help but feel that it is this false statement of the problem that causes Mr. Grube to interpret Plato's magnificent analogy—it is only an analogy—of the "kinship of the soul with the divine," in Cartesian terms of the simplicity and consequently the indissolubility of the soul. If the analogy used in the *Phaedo* be read correctly, then there is no suggestion whatever that Plato, at whatever stage of his life he wrote the dialogue, regarded the soul as a simple entity. To read it in this wise is to miss the point of the argument which is precisely the same as that to which Plato keeps recurring in his later dialogues, namely, the "soul's kinship with the divine." One must therefore call in question the statement: "When Plato comes to consider the problem of immortality in the light of his more advanced psychology, he is at once faced with the difficulty that the arguments for immortality in the *Phaedo* were largely *based on the simple and uniform nature of the soul* [my italics] and its kinship *thereby* [my italics] with the Forms. The soul has now been shown to be a multiplicity of parts and functions. Those arguments then no longer hold and the soul's kinship with the Forms is seriously imperilled."

The nature of divine existence is discussed under the somewhat peculiar heading of "The Gods." The reason for the choice of this title becomes clear when Mr. Grube maintains that in regard to the practical religious life Plato may have been a polytheist. There is no evidence, at any rate, he argues, that he was a monotheist and still less that he was a theist in any Christian sense of the word. The last is probably true. As the author shows in his fine discussion of Eros, the divine love is really man's own aspiration after that which is eternal, and, again, "Eros, in Plato, looks ever upwards and the love of God can only be the love we feel for him (or them)." There is indeed no correspondence between Eros and the Christian *Agape*. As Professor A. E. Taylor has pointed out, "Plato knows nothing of a God who loves sinners." At the same time it is surely difficult to accept Mr. Grube's view that the whole creation story of the *Timaeus* is myth. It is true that Plato is "telling the most likely story," but is there not another possibility, namely, the view taken by Professor Taylor, that in regard to the temporal world we may have opinion and probable hypotheses though we cannot have knowledge in Plato's sense? If this be so, the assumption of a "maker" distinct both from the Forms and from the temporal world is something more than "a stage device," and God cannot be simply identified with the "world soul." But whether the narrative of Timaeus is myth or science of a kind, Mr. Grube's interpretation of God's relation to the Forms is distinctly unsatisfactory. "This maker must have an eternal and ever-same pattern before him at the time of creation, and the pattern is the Forms. So that within the myth itself, even if we take the time-sequence literally, the Ideas are prior to God and exist before him." Surely not, if the Ideas themselves are not in time. And again, "if the Forms remain thus absolutely objective they must remain also prior to the god, though not in time." It would be interesting to know, then, what sort of priority this is which has no reference to time! Presumably Mr. Grube must mean logical priority, though it does not at all follow as he argues, that because the Forms have objective reality they are independent of God. Independent of his will, perhaps, but not of his intelligence. And it is precisely such a distinction that Plato himself seems to have in mind when God's will is introduced in order to give dynamic, and hence creative, agency to the Ideas which otherwise remain static and lifeless. Thus we are told that the temporal world owes its being to a "will that is good."

It is possible that Mr. Grube's deprecation of the tendency of the Christian commentators to read their own doctrine of God into the *Timaeus* has led him to a view which is even less tenable, namely, that there is no theistic conception in the dialogue at all.

To continue on this critical note is to give but a poor idea of the general excellence of this book, and it is perhaps hardly necessary to say that I have selected some few points for criticism because I have nothing but praise for the volume as a whole. The author indeed is to be congratulated on having written a work which should command the attention of all Platonic scholars. He uses his own translation of Plato throughout. These are always clear and relevant if occasionally a little cumbersome. On two main points only I may comment. The translation of the Greek ἁρμονία as "harmony" is at least ambiguous, and why is τὸ ὅσιον translated as "right" when the word has a definite meaning of religious duty? There are four appendices on special points of interpretation of four of the Dialogues, the *Phaedo*, *Sophist*, *Politicus*, and *Philebus*.

SWIFT IN IRELAND*

Louis A. Landa

In Professor Herbert Davis's edition of the *Drapier Letters* the student of Swift and of Irish history will find a complete view of the controversy which raged around the letters patent granted to that "low mechanic," William Wood, Esquire, of Woolverhampton, for the coining of halfpence and farthings for the people of Ireland. When news of the "vile project" reached Ireland in July of 1722, where, as usual, no one had been consulted as to the wisdom or necessity of the proceeding, there was a surge of feeling and rhetoric that increased in volume over a period of two years and that subsided only when the patent was withdrawn. Swift's part in the quarrel as pamphleteer extraordinary is easily accessible to posterity

**The Drapier's Letters to the People of Ireland against receiving Wood's Halfpence*, by Jonathan Swift, edited by Herbert Davis, Professor of English, University College, Toronto, Clarendon Press.

The Letters of Jonathan Swift to Charles Ford, edited by David Nichol Smith, Clarendon Press.

in the form of the seven letters that he wrote under the name of M. B. Drapier. It is these letters that Professor Davis has edited—five of them published during the controversy and two later—along with certain supplementary documents necessary for an understanding of the Wood incident. In addition to the admirable Introduction, in which he traces fully the progress of the controversy and orientates it in Irish history, Professor Davis has supplied a richly informative assortment of notes and four appendices which present an account of the later activities of the Drapier and a bibliographical list of pamphlets, broadsides, and verses relating to the affair.

Not the least valuable result of Professor Davis's work is that it tends to correct the somewhat distorted perspective which students of Swift have of the controversy. Too often they conceive of it as an interesting incident in the life of Swift instead of what it actually was, a pyrotechnical display of nationalism in Irish history, a display that would have occurred even if Swift had not been on the scene. This is not to minimize Swift's importance in the affair as both leader and catalytic agent; one merely needs to have emphasized for him, as Professor Davis emphasizes in the Introduction, two aspects of the situation: first, the resentment over the patent to Wood before Swift became interested; secondly, the necessity of viewing the affair, not as an isolated incident, but as one of a series whose net result was to bring disquiet and tension into the political and economic relations of England and Ireland.

Indeed, much had happened before the first Drapier Letter was circulated in March, 1723/24, and the fervent emotions exhibited over Wood's coinage must be explained, at least partially, as the result of accumulated slights of Ireland by England. The humiliations and injustices which Ireland suffered as a dependency were increasingly themes for tracts from the time of the Revolution of 1688. Certainly a large proportion of the Irish people, and very likely many Englishmen, found English policies inadequate and painfully calculated to keep the relations between the two countries in ferment. The examples of English heedlessness are numerous. We point to one only: the act of the English parliament in 1698 which throttled the growing woollen manufacturing industry in Ireland, an act, passed at the urgent request of English manufacturers, to prohibit the exportation of wool or woollen goods to any place except England. Little wonder that in the same year

William Molineux, Locke's friend, was writing: "*That* Ireland *should be bound by Acts of Parliament made in* England, *is against Reason, and the Common Rights of all Mankind.*" It is not possible to gauge with any precision how widespread were the sentiments for Irish political independence by 1720, but the English parliament felt the necessity for reaffirming in unequivocal terms the complete subserviency of Ireland to England. Irish feelings were exacerbated again.

Thus in 1722 the spirit of resistance to England, formulated as a result of past grievances, began easily to organize itself around the patent granted to Wood. By the time Swift entered the controversy much had occurred. James Maculla had published his tract, *Ireland's Consternation*, which the Duke of Grafton, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, described in a letter to Walpole as "calculated to stir up ill blood." Both houses of the Irish parliament had protested. The coinage had become a favourite topic in private correspondence. And the Archbishop of Dublin, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and his brother had come together in opposition to the patent. Also, the reverberations had reached England and were slowly bringing to a head the dissension between Walpole and Carteret, with the eventual result that Carteret found himself relieving Grafton as Lord Lieutenant on the very day that the fourth Drapier Letter was being circulated. Swift's entry into the controversy in March, 1723/24, was then belated, though timely. He found opinion ready for the tone and method which he adopted; and the five Drapier Letters published at appropriate intervals during the controversy, filled as they were with a firmly resistant spirit and the assurance of a righteous cause, served to comfort and rally the opposition to the patent. Though the English government must have capitulated eventually, it is testimony to Swift's greatness in the art of political persuasion—exhibited earlier in the *Examiner*—that the capitulation came as soon as it did. The ironical elevation of Swift to the position of "Hibernian Patriot," the hero of a country where he thought of himself as being in exile—"wretched Dublin in miserable Ireland"—is well known. So too are his efforts thereafter to gain for that country better treatment from England and some measure of the decencies of life.

A discussion of the merits of the controversy and of Swift's motives for taking part is likely to be fruitless, though most of those who have recorded the affair have set down their speculations.

Stanhope, Lecky, and Froude had their views of the rights and wrongs of the situation. Swift's encomiasts have enlarged on his humanity, his love of freedom; his detractors have emphasized his enmity to Walpole. Certainly Swift would have been something less than human if the embarrassment which he was causing the Walpole cabinet had not added some zest to his efforts. But Professor Davis does not stray from a decorous historical attitude; he has included documents which illuminate the position of each side, and his interpretations are critical and detached. The vast amount of scholarly effort that has gone into the making of this edition is obvious; the results are eminently satisfying.

Professor D. Nichol Smith's edition of the letters that passed between Swift and his friend Charles Ford, is an imposing contribution too, though different in kind. It contains fifty-one letters from Swift to Ford that have not been hitherto published, ranging in date over a quarter of a century, from 1708 to 1736. These form an important addition to the six volumes of Swift's *Correspondence* already edited by F. Elrington Ball. Ford, like Swift, was born in Ireland and found England more congenial; more fortunate than Swift he was able to spend most of his life there, and the majority of these letters are from Swift in Ireland to Ford in London. The two first became acquainted in 1708, and the long friendship that followed was for Swift a highly convenient, if not an influential one. Ford, luxuriating in London, was a constant source of political information to Swift, languishing in Ireland, not to mention his energy in taking care of Swift's affairs with London printers and booksellers. But not all the tangible rewards of friendship accrued to Swift; he was responsible for Ford's appointment as editor of the *London Gazette*, a position which the "sprightly" Charles held from 1712 to the appearance of George I, when, with Harley, Bolingbroke, and Swift, he found himself in a precarious situation. Professor Nichol Smith has traced Ford's career in his Introduction; we need not follow it here. Our main concern is with Swift.

These letters do not necessitate any revaluation of Swift as we know him from his other letters. The editor is quite right in his statement that here Swift is more consistently in undress, but we are already familiar with his intimate life, with that pleasant mixture of large and small detail that gives verve and flavour to his correspondence. Stella's decreasing appetite ("she eats about 2 ounces a week, and even drinks less than she did"), the appoint-

ment of bishops, Swift's want of exercise, affairs of state—all of them are jumbled in. The peculiar importance of these letters lies in the more complete revelation than we have had before of Swift's existence in Ireland and in certain details which fill in gaps in our knowledge or confirm previous speculations. There are, for example, new details about his tract, *An Enquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry*, which indicate conclusively that Swift was wholly unaware of whatever designs Oxford and Bolingbroke may have had for bringing in the Pretender. But more significant is the ease with which we can trace the composition and final revisions of *Gulliver's Travels* by scattered references to its progress; and we see clearly that it is to Ford that we owe thanks for the uncorrupted edition of the text published by Faulkner in 1735. Like most of Swift's letters, these transcend personal limits and are useful in lighting up a period. The work of Professor Nichol Smith as editor is at once comprehensive and suggestive; it deserves only the highest commendation.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL EXCAVATION[1]

LEROY WATERMAN

It is a pleasure to welcome a new volume in the Harvard Semitic Series. It comes as the result of excavations at the site of ancient Nuzi, near the modern Kirkuk in Iraq, conducted under the auspices of the Semitic Museum and the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University in co-operation with the American School of Oriental Research of Baghdad. The general title "Excavations at Nuzi" gives appropriate recognition to the sound principle that no work of excavation is finished until the results are published. The present work appears as volume III in the series dealing with the results from the same site, and consists almost entirely of those obtained

[1] *Old Akkadian, Sumerian, and Cappadocian Texts from Nuzi*, by Theophile James Meek, Professor of Semitics, University College, Toronto. (Excavations at Nuzi, conducted by the Semitic Museum and the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, with the co-operation of the American School of Oriental Research at Baghdad, vol. III.) (Harvard Semitic Series, vol. X), Harvard University Press.

during the season of 1930-1, under the directorship of Mr. F. S. Starr, with Professor T. J. Meek as epigraphist. It was highly appropriate, therefore, that Professor Meek should serve as the interpreter of the textual material.

The book contains ninety-four plates of early Cuneiform texts reproduced in facsimile, accompanied by an introduction, lists of proper names, summary of contents, complete transliteration and translation of a few unusual texts, and brief discussions of moot points.

The bulk of the work (nos. 2-222) is a compendium of Old Akkadian texts from levels III and IV of the site, which must be placed fairly early in the third millenium B.C. From them we learn that the name of the city was not yet Nuzi; it bore an older name, perhaps to be pronounced Gasur. Nos. 4-12 are letters, but all may be classified as business documents dealing almost entirely with agriculture.

These documents are of unusual interest, constituting as they do the only group of early Sargonid texts yet to be found in northern Mesopotamia. Their contribution to our knowledge is of first-rate importance. They show that the earlier civilization in this region was Sumerian, since virtually all occupations and professions were known by Sumerian names, and likewise Sumerian furnished the names for domestic animals, tools and utensils, and most products. The great majority of the people were, however, Akkadian Semites, as is witnessed by the personal names. The texts thus bear witness to the very rapid semitizing of Sargon's empire as far at least as northern Mesopotamia.

The closeness of Gasur to the city of Asshur leads us to anticipate some evidence of the latter. Actually our texts do contain the city's name always written *A-šir*^{ki}, and these references constitute our earliest notices of the city. The absence of the name of the god Ashur might be taken to imply that the city-name preceded the god, but with only four verifiable spellings of the city-name in much-broken texts, further evidence will be required to establish such a conclusion. The complete absence of either Kassite or Hurrian names corresponds with what we should expect as to the former, and furnishes another proof that the Hurrians were closely contemporary with the Kassites and that their presence in Mesopotamia was probably due to similar causes.

These business documents are as dull and wearisome reading as

our own leases, bills of sale, and chattel mortgages; but they give a surprisingly complete close-up view of the economic life of that ancient community. The complete absence of reference to the horse is noticeable, although it was known, at least in lower Babylonia, still earlier. Oxen are never designated as draught animals but only as fat cattle (109, 110). It would seem that the heavier oxen were raised for beef and the lighter cows used for plowing, as in Iraq to-day. Asses are also mentioned as draught animals (202). Sheep were by far the most common domestic animals. More noticeable, however, is the mention of swine. The people were Semites and their antipathy to this animal was very old and widespread, but a reference to barley as pig-feed (113), fat and fed pigs (177, 181, 191), their sale (117), and transactions in lard (110, 168, 169), fail to show any scruples against pork among these Akkadian Semites. Their staple crop was barley. More than two-thirds of the texts deal with transactions involving this grain. Wheat was known and cultivated, but probably only to a slight extent, there being less than a half-dozen references to it. Emmer, *i.e.* split wheat, is referred to twice as often as wheat, but it was also evidently of only minor importance at the time.

One tablet found among the business documents is very nearly unique, that is the "map" (no. 1). The area covered cannot now be exactly determined. However, the cardinal points are clear. The mountains to north and south, the presence of streams or canals and probable town-sites are evident. The identification of one of these would locate the area in the neighbourhood of Gasur. It seems probable that this interest in early map-making centred in real estate and that the purpose of the document was to locate an estate of some three hundred acres marked with a small circle near the centre of the map.

In addition to this fairly unified body of textual material, nos. 223-231 constitute an appendix. They include the single Sumerian text (228) from the third dynasty of Ur (2400-2300 B.C.), found at the site in 1928, but of no precise provenance. The remainder are from Level II. One, a middle Assyrian state document, from the petty Assyrian city-king of Arrapha (see p. xxvi), piques our curiosity as to how it came to be in Nuzi. More outstanding are the five Cappadocian letters (223-227) since they are the first Cappadocian texts found outside Asia Minor, to be published.

The book contains relatively few typographical errors.[2] In the use of brackets with proper names there is what appears to be an oversight. Brackets are used, and properly, with relatively few names. The reader, therefore, has a right to suppose that where brackets do not occur the names are intact. This, however, does not prove to be the case. There are scores of names that call for much more bracketing than those that are thus indicated. Moreover, in numerous cases the traces of a name are so slight as to seem to the reviewer to leave little more than instinct as a guide to their restoration. On the other hand, it is easy to see why the majority of restorations are made as they are, but for scientific use all restorations need to be indicated, if any but readers of cuneiform are to deal with the lists.

The autographed texts are beautifully and painstakingly done. The author's digest of their contents is both concise and illuminating, and his discussion of moot points carefully documented.

The expedition and the epigraphist are to be warmly congratulated upon this achievement. Seldom has a volume of cuneiform texts of like size yielded more solid results or opened up more vividly new vistas into the past.

[2]Those noted by the reviewer, are: on p. xxvi, "No. 230" should be "No. 231;" in indices of names under "Adda 4," "154 IV 16" is wrong; under "Baba 4," "f" is presumably a slip for "m;" under "Hizida," "101: 1" should be "101: r. 1;" "Šudada" (59: 6) should be "Dada;" under "Puzuzu 1," "185 I 6" should be "185 I 16."